

LETTERS
ON
PALESTINE:

OR,
SKETCHES OF TRAVEL

ALONG THE EASTERN SHORES OF THE MEDITERRANEAN.

T H O M A S W E L L S .

Her gold is dim, and mute her music's voice;
The fountains o'er her perished pomp rejoice;
Her wine-cup of festivity is spilt,
And all is o'er—her grandeur and her guilt.

MILMAN.

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P R E F A C E .

THE Letters on Palestine form a part of a Journal which was written during different journeys along the shores of the Mediterranean. While absent—nearly a period of four years—the author of the following pages had frequent opportunities of visiting that portion of the East known as the Holy Land, and venerated by the pious Christian as the spot where the events connected with the life and sufferings of the Saviour transpired, and where the most remarkable scenes, as recorded in Scripture, were witnessed by the world.

In the following sketches the author has chiefly confined himself to those objects and places which came under his own observation. The impressions are given as they were received on the spot. While journeying through Palestine, it was the privilege of the writer to visit several of the most noted places of that remarkable country ; particularly those mentioned in Scripture, and to which the Christian is bound by the strongest associations. Readers of the Bible, and those interested in matters connected with sacred history, will not feel indifferent when Jerusalem, and the hill country of Judea are mentioned : spots once “the joy of the whole earth,” the “perfection of beauty,” now trodden ‘to the dust, and groaning beneath the yoke of the oppressor.

The aspect and condition of most of the places mentioned in these sketches hardly vary from year to year. Since the days of the Crusaders not a shadow of change has passed over the land inhabited by Israel and Judah. The descriptions of Palestine, as given by the earliest travellers, would, with little variation, agree with those of the existing period.

The present movement of the Jews, however, indicates an approaching change in certain portions of the Eastern world. Their emigration from different parts of Europe towards their ancient capital favors the idea that Jerusalem shall again become the scene of some important event. With their faces towards the rising sun, this remarkable people are journeying on to the Canaan of their fathers, earnestly waiting for the hour which shall restore to them the deserted city, and the scattered tribes.

While the author was preparing the following pages for publication, he availed himself of every information which he thought would interest the general reader. The learned commentator was consulted in the illustrations of Scripture, and the traveller quoted whose descriptions of the countries visited, the author knew, from personal observation, to be correct.

The Letters on Palestine, it will be understood, were not written for the edification of the learned in sacred history, or for him who has made the Bible his study; but for those, and there are many, who seldom look into the Word of God, or have but a limited knowledge of the Scriptures. To such these Letters are particularly addressed—to such no apology is offered for the frequent introduction of Scripture passages familiar to the Bible student.

The author is aware that little can be added to the mass of information already published on the subject of Palestine. The Holy Land has been made the theme of able writers, and eloquent speakers. Lectures and books of travel have led to the study of the old world, and caused many to open their Bibles and become instructed. Should any portion of these Letters lead to a similar result, the time and labor bestowed upon them will not have been in vain.

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LETTERS ON PALESTINE.

LETTER I.

*Her gold is dim, and mute her music's voice,
The heathen o'er her perished pomp rejoice.—
Her wine-cup of festivity is spilt,
And all is o'er—her grandeur and her guilt.*

Preliminary Remarks,—Palestine, derived from the Philistines,—Geographical position of the country,—Arrival at Sidon,—Jaffa, sea-port of Jerusalem, houses, inhabitants, environs, fruits,—Antiquity of Jaffa,—Wood cut out of Lebanon,—Illustration from Scripture,—Tabitha restored to life,—Vision of the apostle Peter,—House of Simon the tanner,—Local traditions,—Departure for Jerusalem,—Oppressive taxation,—Tyranny of the Grand Pacha,—Plains of Sharon,—Rude implements of husbandry,—Law, no protection to property or life,—Uncultivated country,—Sharon proverbial for fruitfulness,—Illustration from Scripture,—Ramla, the ancient Arimathæa,—Joseph, the counsellor,—Huts enclosed by mud-walls,—Mode of obtaining fuel.

BEFORE we invite the reader to accompany us through portions of the most interesting country in the world, it may be well to remind him that the Letters on Palestine, as already suggested, are but sketches, not a history of the Holy Land.

Those who wish for fuller information on matters contained in the following pages, will consult the travels of Pococke and Sandys, writers, as correctly remarked, whose simplicity of style and thought afford a voucher for the truth of their narratives. To these may be added the names of Chateaubriand, Dr. Richardson, Dr. Clarke, Burckhardt, Carne, and Henniker, all of whom have contributed much valuable infor-

mation in regard to the localities, government, manners, customs, and actual condition of modern Palestine.*

That portion of the Asiatic continent known as the Holy Land, is comprehended within the thirty-first and thirty-fourth degrees of north latitude. It forms a part of Syria, a country situated at the eastern extremity of the Mediterranean Sea. Lofty mountains on the south separate it from the sandy deserts of Arabia. On the north, it has Mount Lebanon; the Dead Sea and the river Jordan on the east. The climate, soil, and physical character of this celebrated territory, have been elsewhere noted under their respective heads.

In the pleasant month of September we reached the shores of Syria, and landed at ancient Sidon, on the coast of the Mediterranean, about twenty-five miles north of Tyre. After visiting Bairout and Tripoli, we pressed our course for Jaffa, the Joppa of Scripture, and sea-port of Jerusalem.

The town is built on a conical hill, on the summit of which stands a citadel. A strong wall surrounds the place, which contains from ten to twelve hundred houses, and perhaps twice that number of inhabitants.

The environs are laid out in gardens, hedged with the prickly pear, and filled with fruits of the finest flavor. The water-melons are very delicious; so of the orange, lemon, and citron.

Jaffa is considered to be of very ancient date. Its origin is carried back, by some, to a period anterior to the deluge itself. A tradition is preserved, that here Noah lived, and built his ark. Here Solomon ordered the materials of the temple to be brought by sea from Lebanon. "And we will cut wood out of Lebanon, as much as thou shalt need: and we will bring it to thee in floats by sea to Joppa; and thou shalt carry it up to Jerusalem."—2 Chronicles ii. 16.

* Palestine is derived from the Philistines, a people who migrated from Egypt, and having driven out the original inhabitants, settled on the borders of the Mediterranean. Though they occupied but a small portion of the land where they dwelt, they rose to such consequence as to give their name to the whole country.

Here lived the Christian widow, who, having fallen sick and died, was restored to life through the intercession of the apostle. "But Peter—turning him to the body, said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up."—Acts ix. 40.

The vision of the apostle, as he beheld the sheet descending from heaven, and heard the voice proclaiming, "Rise, Peter, kill and eat,"—as well as the reception of the messengers from Cornelius, the centurion, on their arrival at Joppa, need only be noticed to be remembered.

Near the sea-side is an ancient wall, said to be a portion of the house of Simon the tanner, with whom the apostle lodged while at Joppa. Mere matters of conjecture. As regards their truth, some are quite absurd, some barely probable;—others again hardly admit a doubt of their reality. Every spot connected with Scripture history, has some memorial to recall the past. The American consul at Joppa, at whose house we were hospitably entertained, furnished us with mules and donkeys;—thus mounted, we set our faces towards the Holy City. We pushed forward at an early hour;—the road lay through gardens thickly hedged with the prickly pear, and abounding with fruits. The soil produces almost spontaneously, and would richly reward the labor of cultivation. And yet, what stimulus has industry to till the earth, when one third of the produce of the land is paid to the Aga, the commissioned officer of the Turks? The laws afford no protection to the wretched inhabitants, who are exposed to the double plunder of extortioners from within and thieves without. The country, as justly remarked, suffers equally from the tyranny and weakness of the Turkish government, which has strength sufficient to oppress the people, and deprive them of the fruits of their industry, yet lacks the vigor of defending them against the hordes of Arabs who people the surrounding deserts.

Travellers, at the present time, meet with few obstacles in preparing for a journey from Joppa to Jerusalem. It was

not so in the days of the early pilgrimages to the Holy Land. The first protestant who encountered the perils of a voyage to Syria, landed at Joppa in 1581. At that period, the devout pilgrim met with no very civil treatment at the hands of the grand pacha. His highness, it seems, for some trivial offence, sent a servant to pull the Christian traveller from his saddle, and to beat him. Whereupon the offender humbly craved forgiveness; by which timely submission, he probably escaped the bastinado.

We pursue our route, and enter the plains of Sharon, an open, even country, once a fertile and richly cultivated region, and celebrated for its beautiful roses. Here the husbandman is seen at his daily toil, managing a rude implement of primitive construction, or driving an ill-matched pair of animals, in shape of a heifer and an ass, yoked in couples. The peasant usually goes armed; the musket or the knife guards from invasion the hard earnings of the laborer. Law protects neither property nor life.

Most of the surrounding country remains uncultivated; the richest pastures lie neglected, confirming the truth of the remark, that under a bad government even the bounty of Heaven ceases to be a blessing.

The name of Sharon was once proverbial to express a place of extraordinary fertility:—"It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon."—Isa. xxxv. 2.

We halted at Rama, or Ramla, the ancient Arimathæa mentioned in Luke. Here dwelt Joseph, who begged of Pilate the body of Jesus, that he might bury it in his own sepulchre. The town is pleasantly situated, and stands on the high road to Jerusalem. The inhabitants, who are chiefly occupied in husbandry, live in houses, or huts rather, usually enclosed by mud walls. On these walls, exposed to the rays of a hot sun, dung, kneaded into the form of cakes, is dried, and afterwards used for fuel;—a necessary economy in a

country totally destitute of that article. This mode of procuring fire-wood is practised through the country.

The directions, as given to the prophet Ezekiel, in preparing bread with this sort of fuel, have been noticed in another part of this work.

LETTER II.

Impassable roads,—Valley of Jeremiah,—Distance marked by time,—The Holy City explored by numerous travellers,—Source of our religious faith,—Affections of the Christian bound to Palestine by the strongest associations,—Monuments of Pagan superstition destined to fall by the progress of Christianity,—The humble Galilean,—Jerusalem examined with the Bible in our hands,—Dissimilar descriptions of the Judean capital,—Modern Jerusalem,—Convent of the Latin monks,—Church of the Holy Sepulchre,—Relics of the crucifixion,—Empress Helena,—Original Sepulchre not now ascertained,—Entrance fee,—Stone of Unction,—Tomb of Christ,—Paintings,—Impressions on entering the sepulchre,—Pilgrimages endured for the privilege of entering the sanctuary,—Charm of association.

AFTER a short refreshment at Ramla, we took up our route, and halted towards night at the foot of the mountains. Before break of day, we pursued our journey, cheered by the light of the moon and the songs of our Arab guides. Our path lay through the worst road ever travelled by man or beast. Surely some mighty convulsion has changed the aspect of the country in these regions:—else how could the materials for the building of the temple, “the wood cut out of Lebanon,” and landed at Joppa, have been conveyed across these ravines of solitude and rock? * Our mules were snail-slow in pace, travelling at the rate of the camel, or the caravans, three miles an hour, sometimes not more than one. Distance in eastern countries is computed by time; three

* The route commonly taken approaching Jerusalem is through the desolate labyrinth called the valley of Jeremiah. In the neighborhood of these gloomy mountains, is the village which bears the name of the prophet. Here, it is conjectured, he composed the Lamentations.

hours mark the measure of nine miles. Arriving at the summit of a winding hill, we crossed an uncultivated open plain, covered with loose stones, and bare to the sun's scorching heat. At the extremity of this plain, appeared a circuit of Gothic walls, with towers at intervals strongly fortified. Within this enclosure, stripped of its ancient glory, and trodden down by the heathen, stands Jerusalem! "How does the city sit solitary that was full of people! From the daughter of Zion all her beauty is departed!" For a moment, the scene before us could hardly be realized. And is this indeed the spot that once enjoyed the presence and the especial favor of the Almighty? Was it here, we ask ourselves, that the Son of God was nailed to the cross? Was it here that he rose from the dead, and accomplished the work of man's redemption? We came within view of the holy city, just as the morning sun was gilding the distant minarets and mosques. A crowd of thoughts hurried through the mind;—the stillness around harmonized with the feelings of the hour! It has become an era in the life of the writer. From an elevated position, we had a glimpse of the ancient city beneath, around and beyond, "the hill country of Judea." On this height, and before him this scene, Chateaubriand says,—“I paused with my eyes fixed on Jerusalem, reflecting on the total change accomplished in this world by the Son of man, and in vain seeking that temple not one stone of which is left standing upon the other. Were I to live a thousand years,” he adds, “never should I forget that desert, which seems to be pervaded by the greatness of Jehovah, and the terrors of death!”

The appearance and localities of Jerusalem have been so often described, as before observed, that little can be added to what is already known. The Holy City has been explored by pilgrims and travellers of almost every nation. No vestige connected with the ministry and sufferings of the Saviour, has escaped the inquiries of the learned and curious. The votary and the tourist have left us nothing to gather from

among the tombs of the kings, and the sepulchres of the prophets. Every memorial, hallowed by tradition, has afforded a theme for the poet, or a subject for the artist.

Curiosity is yet alive concerning each memorial connected with the city of the Temple, and every trace of its history, however minute, is still sought with eagerness and read with avidity. Whether viewed as the source of our religious faith, or as the most ancient fountain of our historical knowledge, this singular spot of earth has at all times been regarded with feelings of the deepest interest and curiosity. The affections of the pious Christian are bound to Palestine by the strongest associations, and every portion of its varied territory, its mountains, its lakes, and even its deserts, are consecrated in his eyes as the scene of some mighty occurrence.*

Here the Great Teacher appeared, before whose doctrines the proud monuments of pagan superstition were destined to fall; not, in the words of an eloquent writer, by force of arms, but by the progress of opinion and the power of truth. All the nations of Europe glory in the name of the humble Galilean. Armies have been seen swarming into Asia to get possession of his sepulchre, while the east and the west have combined to adorn with their treasures the stable in which he was born, and the sacred mount on which he surrendered his precious life.†

As we enter the walls of the city, we break from monkish instructors, and view the relics unconnected with the legends of the priesthood. We would examine Jerusalem, as Dr. Clark advises, not as pilgrims, but by the light of history, with our Bible in our hands.

Travellers who agree in portraying the principal countries of the east, vary, sometimes, in their accounts of Jerusalem. Some of the pictures are so unlike, that one would hardly imagine them to be descriptions intended to represent the same city. One portrays it as a stately metropolis, presenting a mag-

* Introductory Observations on Palestine. † Dr. Morehead's Dialogues.

nificent assemblage of domes, towers, palaces, and churches. Another speaks of the Judean capital as the reverse of all this ; as a town not worth possession, with deserted streets, and mean houses, forsaken shops, and without commerce. The latter sketch gives the truest idea of modern Jerusalem. Such is the lifeless aspect which the city presents, surrounded by high walls of stone, with here and there a minaret or a mosque rising from a mass of flat-roofed houses. How unlike the splendor of the ancient capital !—"From the daughter of Zion all her beauty is departed !" It has been remarked, that were a person carried blindfold from England and placed in the centre of Jerusalem, or on any of the hills which overlook the city, nothing, perhaps, would exceed his astonishment on the sudden removal of the bandage. From the centre of the neighboring elevation, he would see a wild, rugged, mountainous desert,—no herds depasturing on the summit, no forest clothing the acclivities, no water flowing through the valleys ; but one rude scene of melancholy waste, in the midst of which the ancient glory of Judea bows her head in widowed desolation. On entering the town, the magic of the name, and all his earlier associations, would suffer a still greater violence, and expose him to still stronger disappointment. No "streets of pleasure, and walls of state," no high raised arches of triumph, no fountains to cool the air, or porticoes to exclude the sun, no single vestige to announce its former military greatness, or commercial opulence ; but in the place of these, he would find himself encompassed on every side by walls of rude masonry, the dull uniformity of which is only broken by the occasional protrusion of a small grated window.

It might be added, that he would behold in the "widowed desolation of Judea," the fulfilment of the prophetic doom ; he would behold the city trodden down of the Gentiles, and seek in vain for that temple not one stone of which stands upon another. "Judah is gone into captivity, she dwelleth among the heathen."

As we entered the city, we were annoyed by beggars, and

nearly suffocated with dust.* After pushing our way through several narrow, dirty streets, we halted at the convent of the Latin monks. A blanket and spread mat were sufficient for weary limbs; bare walls of stone and a wooden bench had been luxuries to the early pilgrims. Most readers will recollect that the Empress Helena, mother of Constantine the Great, from pious motives, ordered all the heathen monuments to be destroyed, and built many new edifices. Among the most conspicuous stands the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, or such portions of it as escaped the conflagration of 1808, which destroyed a great part of the edifice. It was rebuilt by the Greeks. The pious empress sought with unabated zeal for the relics of the crucifixion, which, after having been buried three hundred and twenty years, were discovered by her. These relics, according to tradition, consisted of the true cross, together with the nails which were driven through the hands and feet of the Saviour, the spear that pierced his side, and crown of thorns placed upon his head! A flight of steps leads to the chapel, where we are told the Empress Helena prayed while in search of the holy relics. Near the place where the cross is found, is the tomb, or Holy Sepulchre, shown to Helena as that where the body of the Saviour lay. Dr. Clarke thinks this "may be the same place as that pointed out to her, but not a remnant of the original sepulchre can now be ascertained. Others differ from him on the subject. Over this tomb, and the actual site of the crucifixion, the church, as already mentioned, was erected. It is about one hundred paces in length, and sixty in width, surmounted by a spacious dome fifty-eight feet in diameter, and one hundred and fifty feet in height.

The reader will follow us to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the chief spot of interest to travellers led hither by curiosity or devotion. The church has but one door, which

* A traveller who was at Jerusalem during the wet season, remarks that when it rains, the path is as if composed of bits of soap, and is as slippery as if it were actually made of this material. In walking, a person needs be as careful as if he were treading upon ice.

is guarded by the Turks, who demand an entrance fee from all foreign Christians. Over the entrance is an ornamented work in marble, curiously wrought, representing Christ's entry into Jerusalem. On entering the church, the first prominent object which presents itself is an antique marble slab, which tradition points out as the stone of unction. On this the body of Jesus was anointed and prepared for the sepulchre. Over this stone, which is approached with great reverence, silver lamps are suspended, and kept continually burning. Other traditions say that the slab, which is raised above the floor, merely denotes the space where the body of the Redeemer lay previous to its interment. Contiguous to this spot is an excavation, of an oblong shape, hewn out of a solid rock. A low, narrow passage leads to the enclosure, where not more than five or six persons can remain at a time. This is pointed out as the Holy Sepulchre, revered for centuries as the most honored sanctuary of the Church. Hither the devout pilgrim repairs to kneel, and pray, and ask to be forgiven. We were spared the usual ceremony of taking off the shoes on entering these sacred precincts, and the tax, already mentioned, exacted of every Christian, previous to his admission within the church. A priest stands at the entrance of the sepulchre, with a silver vase of holy incense, which he sprinkles over the garments of the pilgrim. The walls and floor of the tomb are composed of marble. One side of this stone chamber marks the place where the body of the Saviour lay. From the dome, a number of large silver lamps are suspended, shedding a bright light throughout the confines of the sepulchre.

Paintings representing the resurrection, and our Lord's appearance to Mary in the garden, are placed over the tomb. And is this the spot, we ask ourselves, where the holy mystery was wrought, where the Son of God burst the bars of death, and triumphed over the grave? In such a place, the most skeptical would indulge the belief that the narrow house where he stands, once held the body of the Redeemer, and that from these confines he ascended in triumph!

The skeptical Dr. Clarke confesses that when he entered the *sanctum sanctorum*, and beheld by the lights continually burning there, the venerable figure of an aged monk, with streaming eyes and long white beard, pointing to the place where the Lord lay, and calling upon all to kneel, and experience pardon for their sins, he knelt, and participated in the feelings of more credulous pilgrims.

What penance, what long and painful pilgrimages have been endured for the privilege of entering this small sanctuary, of kneeling at the tomb of the Saviour, of touching and beholding where he was laid!—Nothing equals the pious fervor of the pilgrim as he here falls on his knees, and with sobs and tears gives utterance to the full feelings of the heart. Unless a person has actually entered within the precincts of the Holy Sepulchre, he can hardly fancy the feelings of another who has seen and touched the memorials of the crucifixion. In beholding these memorials, something is addressed to the senses which mere description cannot supply. As we trod upon the spots where once were witnessed the last sufferings and the burial of Christ, we did not pause and ask if these were real;—if that was Calvary where the Saviour died upon the cross to redeem the human race; or that the tomb in which his body was laid, and from which he rose from the dead! We yielded to the tradition of their reality, unwilling to lose the charm of their association.

LETTER III.

Scenes at Easter-Eve,—Ascent to Calvary,—Disputed localities,—Traditions discordant with common sense,—Attempts to do away the identity of places assigned as sacred,—Inaccuracies of Dr. Clarke,—Idols erected by Hadrian,—Profanation of holy places,—Memorials of the crucifixion,—Spot where the cross stood,—Rent in the Rock,—Conversion of an Infidel,—Paintings representing the crucifixion and descent from the cross,—Places identified in history,—Sion, the holy hill,—Illustration from Scripture,—Gate of the temple,—First Christian temple,—Mosque of David,—Bradford's tomb,—Garden of Gethsemane,—Ancient Olive-trees,—Grottoes and Caves,—Tomb of Absalom,—Church of Ascension.

THE scenes witnessed within the church at Easter-eve often exhibit the grossest absurdities, and partake more of a masquerade sport than a religious ceremony. In some of these exhibitions, as well observed, it is impossible to say whether solemnity, fervor, superstition, ignorance, or sheer madness most predominates. On Good Friday night the monks enact a sort of tragedy of the death of our Lord, in which the prominent characters, as they once existed, are represented by parties. They parade in procession, with an image as large as life of the Saviour nailed to the cross. The scene of his crucifixion is represented, his anointment, and placing the body in the sepulchre. After witnessing such exhibitions, can we, it has been asked, give any credit to the traditions and local descriptions derived from individuals as ignorant, superstitious, and corrupt, as the priests and Christians of Jerusalem?

Near the apartment called the chapel of apparition, the spot is shown where Christ appeared to Mary in the garden; here commences the ascent to Calvary. Its contiguity to the alleged place of sepulchre is thought by some to be evidence sufficient to disprove the locality of both. "When I saw," says Captain Light, "the apparent inclination to crowd a variety of events under one roof, I could not help imagining that the zeal of the early Christians might have been the

cause of their not seeking among the tombs farther from the city the real sepulchre."

Dr. Clarke treats with derision the traditions connected with the church of the holy sepulchre. He pronounces them to be discordant not only with history, but with common sense. He calls them "degrading fallacies," a "farrago of absurdities;" and wonders that learned men who have described Jerusalem, should have filled their pages with any serious detail of them.

Dr. Clarke has labored to do away the identity of places which tradition has uniformly assigned as sacred. The effect of his speculations, as correctly remarked, is to derange all the received notions relative to the scene of the crucifixion, and the place of the holy sepulchre. A late traveller has exposed some of the inaccuracies on the part of Dr. Clarke, whom, though an interesting writer, he considers more deficient in judgment than any traveller with whom he is acquainted. "I do not recollect an instance," he adds, "either here or in Egypt, where he has attempted to speculate, without falling into some decided error. I mention this the more, as his enthusiasm and conviction of the truth of his own theories led me formerly to place great faith in his authority."

In the hope of destroying the testimony of the resurrection and the cross, the image of Jupiter was erected in the place of the former, and the statue of Venus in that of the latter, to be worshipped by the Gentiles. These idols, together with the temple erected by Hadrian, polluted the spot where they stood till the time of Constantine, a period of one hundred and eighty years. To desecrate these holy places, the two idols mentioned were erected at a period while the scenes of the crucifixion were nearly fresh in the memory of man. The general site as well as the actual spots where these events occurred are designated by this profanation, furnishing, as reasonably supposed, satisfactory evidence of the identity of the holy sepulchre, and of its true locality. It has been ob-

served that the same motive of hostility to Christianity which led Hadrian to set up the idols, would also lead him to level this tomb, that hallowed the place in Christian eyes.

The learned, alike with the ignorant, are led by the common influence of curiosity to behold the memorials of the crucifixion. The natural desire to touch and to see such relics, has doubtless been often abused by artifice and fraud. Such will continue to be the case, while the credulous pilgrim listens to the inventions of the priest, and follows the monk as his guide.

Concerning the true spot of the holy sepulchre, or other localities connected with the sufferings and death of the Saviour, it were useless now to inquire, and not important if known. It would add nothing to piety to look upon the stone where Christ was anointed, or touch the cross on which his body was nailed. The important truths on which the history of the Gospel is founded, as well observed, are not so closely connected with particular spots of earth or sacred buildings, as to be rendered doubtful by any mistake on the choice of a locality.

The only way of seeing a country, it is said, is to see it with all its traditions and recollections. If we are determined, however, to carry with us a spirit of cavil and contradiction, Judea is not worth our going so far to examine it. What should we say to a man, observes the author of the *Itineraire*, who, in traversing Greece and Italy, should think of nothing but contradicting Homer and Virgil? Such, however, has been the course adopted by too many modern travellers, who, in their zeal for exciting a high idea of their own abilities, frequently treat with contempt the opinions of others.

Why, then, it has been asked, should any one attempt to disturb the belief or acquiescence of the Christian world on a subject concerning which all nations have hitherto found reason to agree? The main error of the modern priests at Jerusalem is said to arise from the anxiety to exhibit everything to which any allusion is made by the evangelical historians; not remembering that the lapse of ages and the devastation

of successive wars have destroyed much, and disfigured more, which the early disciples could most readily identify. The topography maintained by the friars of Mount Moriah might well be questioned as to its exactness, when it is affirmed that a church not over one hundred paces in length, and not more than sixty wide, contains under its roof twelve or thirteen sanctuaries, reputed to have some particular actions done in them relating to the death and resurrection of Christ. Such are the memorials exhibited at this day, and crowded within the confines of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

Calvary, which once stood a short distance without the walls of Jerusalem, is now a small rising ground, included within the central limits of the modern city. A narrow flight of stone steps, beneath the roof of the church, leads to the elevation, or place of crucifixion. The spot where the cross stood is marked by a hole pierced in the floor. Two other perforations point out where the malefactors suffered. It is apparent enough that little regard was had to relative distances, when the space allotted for three crosses would barely admit of the erection of one. Every traveller is shown the rent in the rock which happened during the crucifixion; nor is this all;—within this rent, we are gravely assured, the head of Adam was found; a mystery only equalled by that of the miraculous properties of the true cross, whose “identified timber” is said to have supplied all Christendom with its relics. Concerning the rent in the rock, the story is told of the instantaneous conversion of an Infidel, on whom all the arguments of the fathers, and the sanctity of the other sacred spots made no impression, till he beheld this cleft, when, seeing that the fissure ran across the strata of the rock, and not with them, he confessed his errors upon the spot, and became a true believer. The story of this sudden conversion was told by a Franciscan monk, who vouched, of course, for its accuracy. With reference to the skull discovered in the fissure of the rock, a traveller pleasantly remarks:—“By what means it was known to be the actual cranium of the progen-

itor of the human race, is a curious consideration, unless indeed it had no suture; but this question must be left to the successors of those profound doctors of the olden time, who started some nice points respecting the form and make of our first parents.

The memorials of the scenes witnessed on Calvary are exhibited on a platform floored with marble. Over the altars erected here, are paintings representing the crucifixion and the descent from the cross. Other objects of minor interest were pointed out, such as have been noticed in all books of travel containing descriptions of the Holy Land. But before we pass from beneath the roof which covers the memorials of the crucifixion,—before we leave the precincts which for fifteen centuries have been revered as the most sacred in Jerusalem,—we pause, and ask, what has been asked before,—“Are the honored spots within these walls really what the guardians of the metropolitan church declare them to be? Is the Mount Calvary, shown this day in the Holy City, the actual place where Christ expired upon the cross to redeem the human race? Is the sepulchre there exhibited actually that of the just man, Joseph of Arimathea, in which the body of the blessed Jesus was laid?—Or are all these merely convenient spots, fixed on at random, and consecrated to serve the interested views of a crafty priesthood?”

We now turn from the uncertainties of tradition to places identified in history; to scenes over which the labors of zeal have not cast the shadow of a change. Though Calvary may have sunk beneath the innovations of spiritual masters, though Zion, the “holy hill,” may have become as a “ploughed field,”* the Mount of Olives stands undisfigured and undisguised. “The features of nature,” says Dr. Clarke, “continue

* “Therefore shall Zion for your sake be ploughed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps.” When Dr. Richardson was at Jerusalem, one part of this spot supported a crop of barley, and another was undergoing the labor of the plough. A literal fulfilment of the prophecy. It presented to us a sterile, sunburnt appearance, the usual aspect of the country during the heat of the summer months.

the same, though works of art have been done away. The beautiful gate of the temple is no more.* But Siloa's fountain haply flows, and Kedron sometimes murmurs in the valley of Jehosaphat."

On the summit of Mount Zion stands the Mosque of David, adjoining which the Christian burial ground is pointed out, containing various tombs of different religious sects. That which afforded the most melancholy interest was the narrow earth which covered the remains of our young countryman, Bradford, who died a few years since at the Franciscan convent. His epitaph says, that he was converted on his death-bed to the Roman Catholic faith, from the Lutheran heresy to the belief in the true church. Young Bradford's confessions, whatever they may have been during his last hours, were doubtless used to advantage by the pious zeal of the ghostly fathers.

Leaving the city at St. Stephen's gate, and crossing Kedron,—its stream now shrunk,—we come to the garden of Gethsemane. A low wall of stone encloses the ground, which, for centuries, has been revered by Christians. The eight ancient olive trees, which stand in the enclosure, are held in great veneration. Their date, by some, is carried back to the time of the Saviour. They have undoubtedly lived through many generations of men, and flourish still in their green old age. It is considered a profanation to lop a twig, or pluck a leaf from any one of these trees. The place where Judas is supposed to have betrayed the Saviour is marked out, with other localities commemorative of the scenes which were witnessed here. Near the garden we pass a small structure, said to be the sepulchre of the Virgin Mary. It was founded by St. Helena. Like other monuments erected by the pious empress, its identity is merely traditional.

* A gate of surpassing beauty, made of Corinthian brass, the most precious metal of ancient times. The temple, according to tradition, had nine gates, which on every side were thickly coated with gold and silver. But the gate called "Beautiful," mentioned in Acts, was larger and far more costly than the others.

A rough uneven path leads to the summit of the Mount of Olives. It was doubtless, as its name implies, once covered with olive trees;—of their number, at present, probably not over fifty remain.

The grottoes and caves standing on and about the mount, commemorate some persons or event recorded in Scripture history. The excavation with arched vaults, towards the summit, is identified as the place where the apostles composed the creed bearing their name. The architecture of its arches, as well as that of other subterraneous chambers, leads us to suppose that the Mount of Olives, at some remote period, wore an aspect widely different from that which it now presents. The monument of the Ionic order, bearing the name of Absalom, though it is not known on what authority, is shown as the tomb of that prince. Like the sepulchres in the vicinity, it is composed of the limestone rock of the adjoining hills. Such is the antipathy of the Jews to this monument, that it is said to have been their practice, in passing, to throw stones against it, as a mark of their reprobation of the rebellion of Absalom against his father. In a cave near this spot, the disciples are supposed to have taken refuge, after the capture of the Saviour. In this vicinity, the judges of Israel and the prophets have their sepulchres, consisting of mere fragments of arches, and walls under ground.

The small octagonal edifice on the summit of the Mount of Olives, was built to commemorate one among the many idle traditions of the early pilgrims. It is the remains of the Church of Ascension, erected by the Empress Helena, whose zeal in preserving the memorials of the crucifixion, and labors in similar acts of piety, have placed her name in the catalogue of saints. The building is now a mosque, crowned by a dome, with a minaret topped with the crescent. Christians and Mahommedans both have access to the church. A niche in the mosque is appropriated for the disciples of the prophet. The different denominations of Christians have altars set

apart for their devotions. A yearly contribution is paid by the latter for the privilege of officiating in this church on Ascension day.

LETTER IV.

Solemn mockeries,—Tradition of the ascension not authorized by Scripture,—City of Palm-trees, its desolation,—View from the Mount of Olives,—Vale of Siddim, the land of salt and sulphur,—Opinions concerning the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah,—Illustration from Scripture,—Shades of the overwhelmed city,—Pastures of Jericho,—Mosque of Omar,—Tradition,—Judgment passed upon the Holy City fulfilled,—Movements of the Jews towards the land of their fathers,—Foreign powers brought into contact with the nations of the East,—Remarkable manifestations intended to favor the people of Israel,—European Jews looking toward the Holy Land,—Instance of their anxiety to repair to Palestine,—Prayer of the Hebrew festival,—Privations endured by the Jews to enter the city of David.

A PRIEST stands ready to besprinkle your garments as you enter the Church of Ascension,—and for what? That you may be purified before you are permitted to look on one of the solemn mockeries of modern invention,—the print of the left foot of a man, ten inches in length and four in breadth, said to be that of Christ, where he last touched the earth, previous to his ascension. That the ascension occurred from the Mount of Olives, rests merely on the authority of monkish tradition. The passage in St. Luke contradicts the assertion; the words of the evangelist expressly say:—"He led them forth as far as Bethany; and it came to pass when he blessed them that he was parted from them and carried up into heaven." Bethany is on the Jericho road,* not on the Mount of Olives, and stands about two miles distant, east from Jerusalem. But superstition, as justly remarked, has established

* Jericho was once called the "City of Palm-trees," and at one period was rated second in consequence to the Judean capital itself. Portions of an ancient tower, supposed to have been the dwelling of Zaccheus the publican, are all that now remains of its once splendid edifices. Mark Anthony presented to Cleopatra the whole territory of Jericho.

the precise *locale* of every action of our Saviour, and all who belonged to him; the round of which the weary pilgrim is compelled to make before he can obtain a certificate of the saving performance of his pilgrimage.

From the summit of the Mount of Olives, we beheld a varied and interesting scene. In distance, towards the east, Mount Pisgah soars above the adjacent hills. There Moses stood, and from the mountain's peering top was permitted to behold the promised inheritance. In this direction, we trace the Jordan mingling with the waters of the Dead Sea;—beyond, the Arabian chain of mountains, like some gigantic wall, stretches from north to south. Scarcely an undulation breaks the long level line of the summit. The slight inflexions seem to borrow the idea, as if the hand of the painter, who drew this horizontal line along the sky, had trembled in some places.

Through the vale of Sodom still flow the bitter waters of the Dead Sea. No verdure springs here, no gladdening spot of earth here cheers the way of the traveller. The solitude, the dismal lake, yet remain to record the fate of the guilty cities. The pleasant and fruitful plains have become a desert, “a land of salt and sulphur, where can be neither planting nor sowing.”

From the volcanic character of this region, some are of opinion that Sodom and Gomorrah were overwhelmed by fiery eruptions,—others by lightning from the clouds igniting the combustible matter supposed to abound in the vicinity. Chateaubriand conjectures these cities were built upon a bituminous mine, forming a mass of combustibles;—that this mass was kindled by lightning, and the cities swallowed in the subterraneous fires. But these notions are incompatible with Scripture authority, and do not agree with the descriptions there given of the nature of the soil about these parts. Places where brimstone and salt are found are naturally most barren and unfruitful;—hence, it has been observed, to represent unfruitful and desolate places, the sacred writers describe

them as abounding in these materials. On the contrary, the vale of Siddim is represented as a fruitful vale, well watered, and adapted to the pasturing of cattle, for which reason it was chosen by Lot in preference to any other part of the land. "And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere, before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar."—Genesis xiii. 10.

This passage has been quoted as testimony that the sulphur and the salt, as well as the indication of subterraneous fires which are to be found about the Dead Sea now, are rather the effects of the destruction poured upon the spot, than the natural productions of the place before that event.

Malte Brun supposes, that the stones on which the ruined towns themselves were built, might be bituminous, and consequently exposed to the action of fire. These views appear plausible when taken in connection with the Mosaic account of the place—that the vale of Siddim, which is now occupied by the Dead Sea, was full of "lime pits," or pits of bitumen. It is reasonable to believe, however, that the combustible matter descended from heaven upon the devoted cities of the plain. The language of Scripture is precise and explicit—"The Lord rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from heaven." According to Strabo, thirteen towns were swallowed up in the lake Asphaltites; others reckon eight. The book of Genesis, although it names five as situated in the vale of Siddim, relates the destruction of two only; four are mentioned in Deuteronomy, and five in Ecclesiasticus. Several affirm that they saw fragments of walls and palaces in the waters of the Dead Sea. Josephus says, he observed on the shores of the Dead Sea "the shades of the overwhelmed city." Nothing, as yet, has been satisfactorily ascertained on this interesting subject. We must agree with the author from whom we abridge these remarks, that until something is proved with regard to the fact, we are forced to

the alternative of looking upon it as apocryphal. From this digression we return to the scene before us.

In another direction north, beneath the desolate mountains of Judea, surrounded by barren solitudes, lie the once fertile pastures of Jericho. Opposite the Mount of Olives, on an inclined plain, sloping from east to west, stands Jerusalem. From the point where we stood, we had a distinct view of the city and its edifices.

On the site of the ancient temple rises the magnificent Mosque of Omar, justly styled the St. Peter's of the Turks. Its dark cupola and glittering ornaments of blue porcelain form a striking contrast to the few scattered minarets and mean, low-roofed houses. The Mosque of Omar is said to owe its origin to a large, oblong-shaped stone, which occupies the centre of the building. Like the Palladium of Troy, to which the miraculous stone has been compared, it came from heaven, and rested on the identical spot where it now stands. This happened, observes Mr. Carne, when prophecy began at Jerusalem, and was used by those who were endowed with the gift of vaticination. Like the stone in the fairy tale, which changed its hues with the fortunes of the possessor, this stone manifests sympathy in the fate of the prophets when they were compelled to evacuate Jerusalem, even so far as to give indications of a desire to accompany them in their flight. But by the interposition of the angel Gabriel and Mahomet, it was found immediately in the place where it now stands, and around it the Calif Omar reared his gorgeous temple.*

Near by, occupying a portion of the same site, stands the Mosque El Aksa. The two mosques, with the courts and gardens attached to them, occupy a large space, and form the principal feature in perspective. The towering minaret, supposed to be erected on the site of Pilate's house, is another of the prominent objects which stands out from among the rest. Beyond, within the confines of the city, rises "the honored sanctuary of the Christian," the Church of the Holy Sepul-

* Carne's Letters from the East.

chre. Mosques, convents, and smaller domes shoot up in divers directions. These, being chiefly formed of the white limestone of the neighboring mountains, present a dazzling appearance when glittering in the bright rays of the sun. Towers, gates, and battlemented walls extend round the city, which is estimated to be short of three miles in circuit.

From the Mount of Olives, Christ looked down upon the city as he pronounced the prophetic doom which aftertime saw fulfilled. As we behold Jerusalem in her desolation, we think of her glory in the day of her luxurious prince. Where are the thrones of her kings, the high places of her mighty people?—her temples of the cedars of Lebanon, and the gold of Ophir?—her palaces, her courts, and crowded streets?—The Infidel treads upon the tombs of the anointed, and the crescent gleams from the hills of Zion.

The city of Jerusalem, it is conjectured, shall again enjoy favors which shall render it conspicuous. The movements of the Jews from various parts of Europe towards the land of their fathers, have excited no small degree of interest throughout the learned and religious world.

Foreign powers have recently been brought in contact with the nations of the East. A change has been already effected amongst a people where no change was expected. A yet more important change may be looked for,—a restoration of which Jerusalem will be made the centre.

From recent events, we cannot but believe the people of Israel are to experience some remarkable manifestation, intended to favor their condition among the nations of the earth. Six times they have beheld the destruction of their city; still their hearts faint not, nor is their belief shaken.

The really sincere among the European Jews are now looking with longing eyes in the direction of the Holy Land. An opinion is prevalent among them, that they shall speedily be restored to their own country; that the changes which have lately taken place in the East, are designed by the Most High to be preparatory for a signal manifestation of his favor to his

ancient and still beloved people. A singular instance of anxiety to repair to Palestine has lately been given by the Polish Jews. Thirty thousand of them presented a petition to the Emperor Nicholas, requesting him to allow them to proceed in a body to the Holy Land, there to await the coming of the Messiah for three years ; promising at the same time to return to Poland and embrace the Christian faith, if their expected Deliverer should not appear within that time. The Jews of Palestine, however, warmly dissuaded their brethren from taking such a step, and it seems very unlikely that their petition would be favorably received by the emperor, who is exceedingly jealous of all movements among his Hebrew subjects.*

Amidst the ruins of their ancient capital, surrounded by their desolate tribes, the prayers are said, the hymns are sung. "For eighteen hundred years," says an eloquent writer, "their faith has sustained them without a king, a prophet, or a priest, through insult, poverty, torture, and death ; and now, in the nineteenth century, in the midst of the march of intellect, and what is far better, in the greater diffusion of the written word of God both among Jews and Christians, we hear from all the harmonious assent to the prayer that concludes every Hebrew festival,—The year that approaches,—Oh ! bring us to Jerusalem."

"Who could see without emotion," says Dr. Bowring, "thousands of poor Israelites, who, from the remotest part of Europe, have made their way by long and weary pilgrimage, through privations incalculable, and sufferings without end, often shoeless and almost clothesless, friendless, penniless, that they might see the city of David, and lay their bones in the bosom of Jerusalem. What multitudes, he adds, are there among them who have sold their last possession, and have started, marching towards the rising sun, from the Vistula, the Dnieper and the Danube, on a journey long as perilous. How many have perished, exhausted on the way ! How many that have landed at Joppa, or crossed the Taurus at

* History of the Jews, p. 266.

Antioch have been unable, from overexhaustion, to reach the longed-for goal! How many have sunk within sight of the Mount of Olives! How many have closed their eyes in peace and blessedness, when the privilege has been vouchsafed to them of treading within the walls of Salem!"

The remark is true, that wherever settled, and for however long, they still cherish a recollection or reference unparalleled among nations. They have not lost it; they will not lose it; and they transmit it to their posterity, however comfortably they may be settled in any residence, or in any country. They hope against hope, to see Zion and Jerusalem revive from their ashes.

LETTER V.

Jews in Jerusalem,—Population,—Appearances of Poverty,—Rapacity of the Turks,—Misery of the poorer classes,—Israelitish houses.—Remark of the Prince of Condé,—A Jew, the evidence of eighteen centuries to the truth of Christianity,—Modern Hebrew in Jerusalem,—Descendants of Abraham, their existence as a people a standing proof of the truth of the Bible,—Confluence of the Jews towards Jerusalem,—The race of Abraham scattered to the ends of the earth; their restoration,—Illustration from Scripture,—Tokens of the approaching deliverance of the Jews,—The present condition of the sons of Jacob,—Valley of Jehosaphat.

THREADING the streets of Jerusalem, we frequently met the lineal descendants of the patriarch of Israel. Looking for their Deliverer, with their eyes fixed on Zion, here linger the remnants of a persecuted tribe—

"Their glory faded, and their race dispersed,
The last of nations now, though once the first."

Amidst the oppressions and insults of his enemies, here dwells the legitimate Jew, though truly called a slave and a stranger in his own land.

The Jewish population in Jerusalem has been variously estimated. The whole number of inhabitants has been rated at twenty thousand; ten thousand of these are Jews, five

thousand Christians, and the same number of Turks. The lower division of the city, the most offensive and dirtiest of all, is chiefly occupied by the Jews. The whole population of the Jewish nation was estimated some few years ago, for the information of Napoleon, at the following amount; but from what documents it is not known:—In the Turkish empire, one million; in Persia, China, India, on the east and west of the Ganges, three hundred thousand; in the west of Europe, Africa, and America, one million seven hundred thousand,—total, three millions. This number is supposed to be very far short of the truth. Malte Brun estimates the whole number at from four to five millions. These are scattered over the face of the whole earth, but still preserving the same laws which their forefathers received from their inspired lawgiver more than three thousand years ago. In their worship, as Mr. Carne says, they still sing those pathetic hymns which their manifold tribulations have inspired; bewailing, amidst the ruins of their ancient capital, the fallen city and the desolate tribes.

Several of these people are affluent, and live in very comfortable circumstances. But they often study to preserve the appearance of poverty that they may not excite the jealousy of the Turks, who are not over-conscientious in seizing the possessions of the Israelite. The same remark will apply to the Christians, who, in Mr. Carne's opinion, suffer nearly the same from the rapacity of Turkish despotism. The Jews, both men and women, residing in Jerusalem, are more attractive in their persons than those of their nation who are seen in Europe;—their features are not so strongly marked with the indelible Hebrew traits, but are more mild and interesting.

The lower part of the city, known as the Jewish quarter, presents a revolting picture of filth and wretchedness. A late traveller, who had the curiosity to pry into one of the Israelitish houses in this direction, gives the following account of the dwelling and its inmates,

" Wanting to purchase some wine, we heard we might get it there ; so we went in search, making it an excuse for prying into the Israelitish dwellings. They seemed, evidently, afraid of letting us know that they had any in their possession ; at length, after several denials, we entered a miserable house, in which there were two or three dirty, unveiled women, and one old blear-eyed man, who, after talking among themselves, apparently about us, whether we might be trusted, brought out a small quantity with great caution. Poor wretches !—everything about them exhibited signs of depression and misery ; outcasts from the common rights and sympathies of men—oppressed and despised alike by Mahometans and Christians—living as aliens in the inheritance of their fathers—what an awful lesson of unbelief do they hold out ! The Prince of Condé said that while a Jew existed, he was a sufficient refutation of all the arguments of Infidelity. A Jew carries with him the evidence of eighteen centuries to the truth of Christianity. He brings to mind, with ten-fold force, the exclamation of St. Paul—' Behold, therefore, the goodness and severity of God : on them which fell, severity ; but towards thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness, otherwise, thou also shalt be cast off.' " *

The Jews regard themselves as the rightful heirs of their ancient capital,—as descendants in a direct line from father Abraham, whose future generation should become the chosen people of God, and whose posterity should be as numerous as the stars of heaven.† They boast of their ancestry, which they consider more ancient and honorable than that of the proudest kings and conquerors of the earth. In our walk to the

* " Three Weeks in Palestine," p. 95.

† The family of Abraham has, from remote antiquity, been extremely numerous. From him, say the Jewish histories, are derived many tribes of Arabs, descending through Ishmael and others, by Keturah, to say nothing of the Jews ; neither has there been on the face of the earth, since Noah and his sons, any man whose posterity is equally extensive,—any man to whom so many nations refer their origin. Others may have begotten families, but Abraham is the father of nations.

Church of the Holy Sepulchre, we encountered a Jew of the wealthier class on his way to the synagogue. The American missionary, who was with us, pointed him out as one who claimed direct descent from the father of the faithful—the patriarch of Israel. His tall majestic figure, solemn air, and graceful measured tread, were in keeping with his rank and character, and accorded with the train of thought which seemed to occupy his mind. His “fine old testament face,” identified him as the veritable, legitimate Jew. He seemed proud in being set apart from the common race of men, and to glory in the distinction of living unmixed and uncontaminated with the blood of other nations. The character here sketched must not be supposed to resemble the spiritless, trafficking Israelites seen in Europe, and other parts of the world; or the cent per cent usurer, whose name is made a byword and a reproach. The descendant of Abraham whom we encountered in the streets of the Holy City—

Was not the Jew
That Shakspeare drew.

The existence of the Jews as a people distinct from all others, to the present period, is a miracle in the dispensations of Divine Providence, as well as proof of the authenticity of the sacred writings. The long protracted existence of the Hebrews as a separate people, is declared to be, not only a standing evidence of the truth of the Bible, but of that kind which defies hesitation, imitation, or parallel. Were this people, it has been remarked, totally extinct, some might affect to say, that they never existed; or if they did once exist, that they never practised the rites as were imputed to them; or that they were not a numerous people, but a small tribe of ignorant and unsettled Arabs. The care with which the Jews preserve their sacred books, and the conformity of those preserved in the East with those of the West, as lately attested, is a satisfactory argument in favor of the genuineness of both; and further, the dispersion of the nation has

proved the security of these documents ; as it has not been in the power of any one enemy, however potent, to destroy the entire series, or to consign it to oblivion. The truth of the observation is forced upon us,—that while the Persians, the Greeks, and the Romans have disappeared from the face of the earth, this small people, whose origin is more ancient than that of these mighty nations, still survive amidst the ruins of their country, with no alteration of manners, and with no mixture of foreign blood.

The remarkable confluence of the Jews, of late years, towards Palestine, as already suggested, affords a striking evidence that the race of Abraham are fast gathering to the land of their fathers, to the country which they believe will sooner or later be restored to them.

The Jews, as a nation, have been scattered among all people, from the one end of the earth to the other ; yet, in accordance with the promises, they are to be gathered, and brought back from the lands into which they have been driven. “For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land.”—Ezek. xxxvi. 24.

Our times, many believe, are full of the tokens of the approaching deliverance of Israel and Judah. It is impossible, says an eloquent historian, not to be struck with the aspect of that grandest of all moral phenomena, which is suspended upon the history and actual condition of the sons of Jacob. At this moment they are nearly as numerous as when David swayed the sceptre of the Twelve Tribes ; their expectations are the same, their longings are the same ; and on whatever part of the earth’s surface they have their abode, their eyes and their faith are all pointed in the same direction,—to the land of their fathers, and the Holy City where they worshipped. Though rejected by God, and persecuted by man, they have not once, during eighteen hundred years, ceased to repose confidence in the promises made by Jehovah to the founders of their nation ; and although the heart has often

been sick, and the spirit faint, they have never relinquished the hope of that bright reversion in the latter days which is once more to establish the Lord's house on the top of the mountains, and to make Jerusalem the glory of the whole world.*

The reader will now accompany us to the valley of Jehosaphat, the glen which separates the city of Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives. The Jews believe that here all nations are to be gathered at the general doom,—that here

“The judging God shall close the book of fate,—
And here the last assizes keep
For those who wake and those who sleep.”

DRYDEN.

LETTER VI.

Popular belief of the Moslems and Jews,—Golden Gate,—Invisible bridge,—Seat of judgment,—Moslem superstition,—Tradition,—Illustration from Scripture; Mahomedan prophecy,—Presentiment of the Turks,—Day of mourning among the Jews,—Valley of Jehosaphat,—Tombs of Jehosaphat and Absalom,—Illustration from Scripture,—Absalom's pillar,—Tomb of Zachariah,—Jewish burial ground,—Privilege of interment,—Shallow graves,—King's dale,—Egyptian and Grecian architecture united in the structure of the ancient tombs,—Melancholy associations,—Chateaubriand's reflections,—Desolation of the Jews,—Medals representing the daughter of Zion sitting under a palm-tree, foretold by the prophet,—Illustrations from Scripture.

PROJECTING from the wall above the golden gate leading to the mosque of Omar,† is the stone upon which, according to popular belief, Mahomet will be seated at the last day, to superintend the general judgment, which the Mahometans, in common with the Jews, imagine will take place in the

* History of the Jews.

† This gate has been walled up, owing, it is said, to a superstition on the part of the Moslems that their destruction is to enter by it. This is the gate which tradition says our Saviour passed by when he entered Jerusalem from Bethphage, riding on an ass, and having branches of palm strown before him. “And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strewed them in the way.”—Matt. xxi. 8.

valley of Jehosaphat.* Jesus Christ, however, is to be the actual judge, according to the Moslem creed. It is said of the Jews, that they purchase from their oppressors the permission to assemble at this place one day in the year, which they pass in weeping and mourning over the desolation of Jerusalem. A place indeed for lamentation, and well adapted to awaken corresponding feelings in the hearts of the desolate.

As we entered the dreary ravine, the sun was sinking behind the hills of Judea, and the coming shadows of evening cast a deepening gloom along the valley of tombs, for such is Jehosaphat, with its grey-worn sepulchres and broken monuments of the dead. Amidst these ancient tombs stand two small Doric pillars, fronting an excavation, shown as the tomb of Jehosaphat, from which the valley derives its name. It is sometimes called the Grotto of the Disciples, from a tradition that they repaired thither to receive instruction from their

The presentiment of their approaching fate is prevalent among the Moslems. The breaches in the fortifications of Constantinople, through which the second Mahomet and his conquering host poured into the devoted city, have never been repaired; because, they say, there is a prophecy that they will have to use them once more in evacuating their conquest.

- * This is the place selected also by the prophet Joel for the same event. "The Lord will gather all nations in the valley of Jehosaphat, and will plead with them there."—Joel iii. 2, 12. From this passage, many Christians, as well as Jews, have been of opinion that the last judgment will be solemnized in the valley of Jehosaphat. A narrow staircase leads to the opening in the outer wall, where the prophet is to be seated at the general doom. At this place commences what is called the invisible bridge, sharper than the edge of a sword, which, according to the creed, true believers will pass over with the rapidity of lightning, and enter Paradise; but from which the Infidel will fall into the bottomless pit which yawns beneath.

The invisible bridge, or Al-Sirat, as it is called by the Turks, is described as the bridge of breadth, narrower than the thread of a famished spider, and sharper than the edge of a sword, over which the Mussulmans must *skate* into paradise, to which it is the only entrance. The poet refers to Al-Sirat in the Turkish tale, the Giaour—

"Though on Al-Sirat's arch I stood,
Which totters o'er the fiery flood,
With Paradise within my view,
And all the Houris beckoning through."

Divine Teacher. In this valley also stands the monument referred to in a former letter, called the tomb of Absalom, on what authority is not stated. After the death of that prince, his body was cast into a pit, and a heap of stones raised over it. "And they took Absalom, and cast him into a great pit in the wood, and laid a very great heap of stones upon him: and all Israel fled every one to his tent."—2 Sam. xviii. 17.

Absalom having lost his children, and being desirous to perpetuate his name in Israel, erected a pillar in the king's valley, from which circumstance many believe that the monument assigned to Absalom really occupies the site of the one which was set up by him whose name it bears. "Now Absalom in his life-time had reared up for himself a pillar, which is in the King's Dale; for he said, I have no son to keep my name in remembrance; and he called the pillar after his own name: and it is called unto this day Absalom's Place."—2 Sam. xviii. 18. It was a marble column, standing about three hundred paces from Jerusalem. The monument assigned to this prince is a remarkable relic of antiquity, containing a tower in the Gothic taste; the structure, nevertheless, is considered more ancient than that style of architecture. It stands entirely detached from the living rock from which it was hewn. Descriptions of this sepulchre, with that of Jehosaphat and Zachariah, are found in most books of travels in Palestine. Upon the four façades of the reputed tomb of Absalom are cut Ionic pilasters; above which is a frieze with Doric metopes and triglyphs. Over this base rises a square piece of masonry of smaller dimensions; and the whole is crowned by a tall conical dome, having large mouldings round its base, and on its summit something like an imitation of flame. Immediately behind, in the scarped face of the rock, is the architrave of an entrance to a sepulchral chamber, now completely blocked up with stones.*

* The body of this monument, as already stated, is one solid mass of rock, as well as its semi-columns on each face; but the surmounting pyramid appears to be of masonry, with coated sides, and perfectly smooth. Incon-

The next in order is the tomb of Jehosaphat, which is altogether an excavation containing three chambers, the entrance supported by two Doric columns, to reach which, one is obliged to clamber up the rock. The last is the tomb of Zachariah, whose base, similar to that of Absalom, is quadrangular, and isolated from the parent rock, and in like manner adorned with Ionic pilasters; but, instead of metopes and triglyphs, a heavy projecting architrave runs round it, above which rises a smooth pyramid of mason-work.

In the vicinity of these sepulchres stands the burial ground of the Jews, recalling to mind the desolation which seems everywhere to mark the condition of that people. The cemetery is covered with hewn quadrangular flag-stones, placed one upon the other, with inscriptions on each, contrasting sadly, as justly remarked, with the trim and shapely monument of the Moslem, and the squared and polished slab that marks the last resting place of the Christian. Even the privilege of interment here must be purchased at a high rate. From the four quarters of the globe, thither repair the descendants of Abraham, to mix their dust with that of their ancestors; and a foreigner, as truly said, sells to them, for its weight in gold, a spot of earth to cover their remains in the land of their forefathers. The ground is so rocky that considerable labor is required to excavate a very shallow grave; this was noticed by a traveller, who saw one prepared which he estimated to be not more than eighteen inches or two feet deep at most.

siderable in size, and paltry in ornaments, this monument is considered to be remarkably curious. There is no appearance, as Mr. Buckingham observes, of an entrance into any part of it; so that it seems, if a tomb, to have been as firmly closed as the Egyptian pyramids, and, perhaps, for the same respect for the repose of the dead. It is quite probable that the original style and plan of the structure are derived from the country of the Pharaohs; while the Grecian columns and pilasters, as already mentioned, may be the work of a much later period, when the Jews had learned to combine with the massy piles of their more ancient architecture, the elegant lightness which distinguished the times of the Seleucidæ.—*Buckingham's Travels.*

The valley of Jehosaphat, which always served as a burial place for the inhabitants of the Holy City, was once called the King's Dale, from a reference to an event recorded in the history of Abraham ;—it derives its present name, as already mentioned, from that of the sovereign who erected there his magnificent tomb.

In the ancient sepulchres in the valley of Jehosaphat, the taste of Egypt and Greece are combined. In the architecture of these tombs, as noticed by Clarke, that of Memphis and of Athens seems to be allied ; the Jews mixing with it the forms of their own peculiar style. From this combination resulted a heterogeneous kind of structure, forming, in Clarke's opinion, the link between the Pyramids and the Parthenon,—monuments in which you discover a sombre, yet bold and elevated genius, associated with a warm and highly cultivated imagination.

We linger amidst the sepulchres of gone centuries, around, beneath, the tombs of kings, of prophets, and the holy of the earth. We tread the place of graves, the valley of Jehosaphat. No spot within the precincts of the Holy City awakens a deeper sense of awe in the breast of the traveller.

What with the sadness of Jerusalem, from which there ascends no smoke nor issues any sound, the solitude of the mountains, where we see no living being, and the confusion of the tombs, all shattered and half open, one would almost believe, exclaims Chateaubriand, that the trump of doom had already sounded, and that the dead had begun to rise in the valley of Jehosaphat.

The Jews are frequently seen lingering near this solitary place, or sitting by the brook that murmurs through the valley, recalling to mind the captives in Babylon, who sat down and wept when they remembered Zion.

There are several medals of Judea extant, representing the daughter of Zion,—by which figure the Hebrew poets and prophets personified their country,—sitting under a palm-tree, in mournful attitude, and having around her a heap of arms,

shields, &c., on which she is seated. Inscription, *JUDÆA CAPTA*,—*JUDEA VANQUISHED*. But what is more remarkable, we find Judea represented as a woman in sorrow, sitting on the ground, in a passage in the prophet, which foretells the very captivity recorded on these medals. “And her gates shall lament and mourn; and she being desolate, shall sit upon the ground.”—Isa. iii. 26. “Come down, and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon; sit on the ground; there is no throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans: for thou shalt no more be called tender and delicate.”—Isa. xlvii. 1.

LETTER VII.

Garden of Gethsemane,—*Terra Damnatæ*,—Tomb of the blessed Virgin,—Spot where Christ stood as he wept over Jerusalem,—Illustrations from Scripture,—Place where Christ taught the apostles to pray,—Descriptions of travellers standing on the Mount of Olives,—Impressions of the Christian,—Banner of the Lion of the tribe of Judah, an ensign for the gathering of the dispersed of Israel,—Illustration from Scripture,—Passage from the Fall of Jerusalem,—Temple of Solomon in the days of its glory, utterly destroyed by the Romans,—Prediction of the Saviour fulfilled,—Siege of Jerusalem, distress of the inhabitants, city taken by assault,—Scene of carnage.

BETWEEN the foot of the Mount of Olives and the brook Cedron, a distance of two or three hundred yards, stands the Garden of Gethsemane, with a few almond and fig trees, and the eight ancient olive trees referred to in a former letter. This sacred spot recalls to mind several remarkable events as recorded in Scripture. “When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples, over the brook Cedron, where was a garden.”—John xviii. 1. At the upper end of the garden the grotto is pointed out, supposed to mark the scene of the agony and the bloody sweat; a few paces from this is a barren ledge of rock, where, according to tradition, Peter, James and John fell asleep, when their Master retired to

pray that the bitter cup might pass from him. A strip of ground, about forty feet in length, here indicates the place where Judas walked up and betrayed his master with a kiss. It is called the *Terra Damnata*, and is accursed, both by Jew and Turk, as the spot which forever perpetuates the name of a traitor. Near this is a small subterranean chapel, containing, it is said, the tomb of the blessed Virgin, who was miraculously conveyed here after her death, and the tombs also of her husband and mother, St. Anna and St. Joseph, and wonderful to say, of Caiaphas. It is not easy to imagine how the high priest of the Jews got into such company; but death, like misery, as aptly quoted on this occasion, "makes us acquainted with strange bed-fellows." A flight of marble steps leads into this grotto or burying place of the Virgin, a small, square edifice crowned with a dome, and with a single door of entrance, in the Gothic style. It is the remains of a church founded by St. Helena. The Greeks and the Armenians say prayers by turns at the tomb of the Holy Virgin, which is situated at the bottom of the grotto, the interior of which is lighted by a few dull lamps. Here the Syrian Christians have an humble altar; while opposite to it is one said to belong to the Copts, consisting of mere earth, and destitute of all ornaments. The Turks also had a portion of this grotto, according to Chateaubriand; but Buckingham asserts, to the contrary, that they had no right to enter it;—there is a place, however, set apart for the Mussulman to pray, which, at the Virgin's tomb, as was very properly observed, one would not expect to be much in request. Not far from this, on the acclivity of the Mount of Olives, is pointed out the rock where Christ stood as he wept over Jerusalem, and pronounced the destruction of the city and the Temple. "Seest thou these great buildings? there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down."—Mark xiii. 2. "For the days shall come upon thee that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and encompass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground,

and thy children within thee, and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another.”—Luke xix. 43, 44. The ground marked out where the Saviour stood as he pronounced this prophetic doom, was the spot where the tenth legion of the army of Titus encamped. In this vicinity is the grotto of the Creed, referred to in a former letter. Like most of the caves on the mount, it has an apartment, but mostly in ruins. We were also edified with a sight of the spot where our Saviour is said to have stood when the Apostles were taught the universal prayer, saying “After this manner therefore pray ye.”—Luke xi. 2. There are other grottoes and subterraneous chambers along the acclivity of the Mount of Olives, designed to keep in remembrance events either recorded in Scripture or handed down to us by oral tradition.

The view from the summit of the mount has been described by various travellers who have been led hither from curiosity or devotion. The spot, the hill country, and the plains around are certainly calculated to awaken the feelings of devotion and awe. To the Christian it presents the most thrilling, the most profound picture, if we may so call it, which can be contemplated by the mind of man. All the early associations connected with the most important events recorded in Scripture are here centred, as it were, to a point, and the beholder feels himself in the midst of scenes and surrounded by places where the Saviour lived and died to redeem the human race. “The Mount of Olives,” says an eloquent writer, “from its base to its summit is sacred ground. Hither the blessed Jesus used to retire from the harassing turmoil of the unbelieving city, to enjoy calm seclusion, and instil his divine lessons into the ears of his faithful disciples. Most enjoyable is it, indeed, to escape from the degrading superstitions and wretchedness of Jerusalem, to wander over the holy hill, and giving loose to fancy, to summon before the ‘mind’s eye’ the various scenes in which moved that holy and wondrous being by whose presence it was hallowed. As seen from hence, though trodden down to the dust, the ‘widowed

daughter of Zion' still displays sufficient grandeur to aid the imagination in painting her as she once existed, 'the perfection of beauty,'—'the joy of the whole earth;' though upon entering within her walls, the illusion is sadly dissipated; her house is indeed left unto her desolate. Still, as one gazes upon her, the mind becomes insensibly 'rapt into future times;' and assured of the certainty of what shall be hereafter, by what has been, and what is, delights prospectively to view through the telescope of prophetic vision the period when the appointed years of her humiliation being fulfilled, Jerusalem shall shake her bands from off her neck, and arise from the dust in renovated splendor; when the 'banner of the Lion of the tribe of Judah' shall float above her walls, an ensign for the gathering of the dispersed of Israel from the four corners the earth, and it shall be proclaimed unto Zion, 'thy God reigneth; violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders, but Judah shall dwell forever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation. I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning, and thou shalt be called the city of righteousness, the faithful city.' '*

The "Fall of Jerusalem" contains a fine passage descriptive of the scene beheld from the "olive-crowned hill." It will be read with interest in connection with the view seen from the top of Olivet. The poet puts the language into the mouth of Titus, who is supposed to stand upon the Mount of Olives. The beauty of the composition is sufficient apology for its introduction in this place:—

" It must be—

And yet it moves me, Romans! it confounds
The counsels of my firm philosophy,
That Ruin's merciless ploughshare must pass o'er
And barren salt be sown on yon proud city.
As on our olive-crowned hill we stand,
Where Kedron at our feet its scanty stream

* " *Three Weeks in Palestine* "—an able and interesting work.

Distils from stone to stone with gentle motion !
 As through a valley sacred to sweet Peace,—
 How boldly doth it front us, how majestically !
 Like a luxurious vineyard, the hill-side
 Is hung with marble fabrics, line to line,
 Terrace o'er terrace, nearer still, and nearer
 To the blue heavens. Here bright and sumptuous palaces,
 With cool and verdant gardens interspersed ;
 Here towers of war that frown in massy strength,
 While over all hangs the rich purple eve,
 As conscious of its being her last farewell
 Of light and glory to that fated city.
 And as our clouds of battle, dust, and smoke
 Are melted into air, behold the Temple,
 In undisturbed and lone serenity,
 Finding itself a solemn sanctuary
 In the profound of heaven !—It stands before us
 A mount of snow fretted with golden pinnacles !
 The very sun, as though he worshipped there,
 Lingers upon the gilded cedar roofs ;
 And down the long and branching porticoes,
 On every flowery-sculptured capital
 Glitters the homage of his parting beams.
 By Hercules ! the sight might almost win
 The offended majesty of Rome to mercy.*

Although descriptions of the temple are familiar to all readers of Bible history, the following particulars of its appearance, when Vespasian entered Judea, will not be considered out of place.

The temple itself, strictly so called,—comprising the portico, the sanctuary, and the holy of holies,—formed only a small part of the sacred edifice on Mount Moriah, being surrounded by spacious courts, making a square of half a mile in circumference. It was entered through nine gates, which were on

* Vespasian, having been declared emperor by the death of Nero, gave the command of the army to his son Titus, who invested Jerusalem near the time of the Passover, or about the beginning of April, in the year 70. At this time of the great festival the city was crowded to excess, and being torn by different contending factions, and a prey to civil war within its own walls, its downfall was hastened by its own inhabitants, who, instead of uniting with the common enemy, mercilessly destroyed each other, and made wanton destruction of the provisions which might have enabled them to protract the defence.

every side thickly coated with gold and silver. But the "Gate called Beautiful," mentioned in Acts iii. 2, was much larger than the others, more costly and massive, and made of Corinthian brass, the most precious metal of ancient times. The inner temple or sanctuary, was covered on every side with solid plates of gold. Its appearance, says Josephus, had everything that could strike the mind, and astonish the sight. When the sun rose upon it, it reflected such a strong and dazzling effulgence that the eye of the beholder was obliged to turn away from it; being no more able to sustain its radiance than the splendor of the sun. To strangers who approached the capital, it appeared, at a distance, like a huge mountain covered with snow, for where it was not decorated with plates of gold, it was extremely white and glistening. On the top it had sharp-pointed spikes of gold, to prevent any bird from resting upon it and polluting it. Fully was the prediction of its destruction verified. Thirty years after its doom was pronounced by our Saviour, it was utterly destroyed by the Romans, in the same month, and the same day of the month, when Solomon's temple was razed to the ground by the Babylonians, six hundred and fifty-seven years before. Titus wished to save the temple, and gave orders to that effect. But it was necessary for the fulfilment of prophecy, that his orders should be disobeyed, and a soldier set fire to it; when six thousand men, women, and children, who had been led to seek security there by the assurances of a false prophet, perished in the flames, or in attempting to leap from the burning edifice. Titus himself afterwards ordered the very foundations to be dug up; literally fulfilling the prediction of the Saviour, that not one stone of that stupendous pile should be left standing on the other.*

After a series of sanguinary battles, which deprived the

* Some idea of the magnificence of the Temple of Solomon in the days of its glory, may be had from the fact, that the quantity of gold left by David for its use, amounted to the value of one hundred millions of dollars, besides fourteen millions in silver.

Jews, one after another, of their capital towns, they were at length shut up within the walls of their own city. The siege and final reduction of Jerusalem, under Titus, compose a story of suffering and of blood unsurpassed, perhaps, in the annals of the human race. Before the termination of the siege the inhabitants, according to the Jewish historian, were reduced to such distress from famine, that a rich and noble lady was driven by hunger to kill and eat her own child. To cut off all possibility of escape, and prevent supplies from being sent into the city, it was surrounded by a wall, which was built in three days by the united exertions of the besiegers. The city was finally taken by assault, and a dreadful carnage followed. One million one hundred thousand perished in this siege, according to the computation of Josephus:

LETTER VIII.

Eastern and western walls of the city,—Village of Siloa,—Waters of Siloam; healing virtues of the brook,—Milton's invocation,—Fountain of the Virgin,—Gate of St. Stephen,—Illustrations from Scripture,—Gate of Flocks,—Kedron, sink of Jerusalem,—Blood of the sacrifices,—Pool of Bethesda; its antiquity; supposed to be the work of the primitive Jews,—Castle of Antonia, built by Herod the Great,—Illustrations from Scripture,—House of Mercy,—Passage from St. John,—Miracle of the Angel,—Fanciful theory,—Dr. Pococke; his error exposed,—How piety and learning may profit by a knowledge of things as well as words,—“Standing miracle,”—Via Dolorosa, Pilate's palace,—Hall of Judgment,—Holy stairs,—Illustration from Scripture,—Chapel of the Scala Sancta at Rome,—Penance of pilgrims,—Table of the last Supper,—Reed with which Christ was smitten,—Miraculous painting,—Arch of Ecce Homo,—Traditions,—Legends of the Cloister,—Localities; opinions concerning them,—Places identified.

THE high limestone cliff on the western side of the valley of Jehosaphat supports the city walls in that direction; the acclivity on the east is formed by the Mount of Olives, and the Mount of Offence, where Solomon, in his old age, turned his heart to idolatry, and built “A high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, and for Moloch, the abomination of

the children of Ammon.”—1 Kings xi. 7. A few wild olive-trees and withered vines are seen scattered along its declivity. A short distance from this lies the village of Siloa, mostly in ruins. A few miserable stone huts, partly built and partly under ground, are all that remain of the place that once could boast the palace of “Pharaoh’s daughter and Solomon’s queen.” Near at hand is

“Siloa’s brook, that flowed
Fast by the oracle of God—”

where the man, blind from his birth, was restored to sight, to whom Jesus said, “Go wash in the pool of Siloam.”—John ix. 7. Josephus speaks of the waters of Siloam, and mentions that when Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem, they increased, and that the same happened when the city was besieged by Titus. The prophet Isaiah, viii. 6, intimates that the waters of Siloam flowed gently and without noise : “Forasmuch as this people refuseth the waters of Shiloa that go softly.” The pool of Siloam, so remarkable in the history of our Saviour’s miracles, now furnishes but a scanty supply of water, which, notwithstanding its uninviting appearance and disagreeable taste, is still used by the credulous for diseases of the eyes. The healthy virtues of the brook were not lost on Milton, the blind old bard, who invoked its aid in his “adventurous song.” The lines are familiar to all readers of English poetry :—

“Sing heavenly muse, that on the secret top
Of Oreb or of Sinai, didst inspire
That shepherd who first taught the chosen seed,
In the beginning, how the heavens and earth
Rose out of chaos ; or if Zion hill
Delight thee more, and Siloa’s brook, that flowed
Fast by the oracle of God ; I thence
Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song.”

The Levites, as we are told, used to sprinkle the water of Siloam on the altar, at the feast of tabernacles, saying, “Ye shall draw water with joy from the wells of salvation.”

The source of the rivulet is by some called the Fountain of the Virgin, from the belief that the holy mother often repaired hither to drink of its stream. / The water in its fresh state appears to be remarkably pure. The small quantity which we took away, and preserved in a glass vial, gave proof of this. When undisturbed, it was clear as crystal, exhibiting a sediment at the bottom in appearance like clarified salts.

In another direction we enter the city by the gate of St. Stephen, so called from the tradition that through this gate the proto-martyr, St. Stephen, passed when he was led out to be stoned. "Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, and cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul."—Acts vii. 57, 58. In the time of the Jews it was called the Gate of Flocks, for the cattle destined to be sacrificed in the temple came in at this gate. In the vicinity of this is a single-arched bridge which crosses the brook Kedron.

It will be recollected that a branch of the valley of Kedron was the sink of Jerusalem, and that here Asa, Hezekiah, and Josiah burnt the idols and abominations of the apostate Jews. 2 Kings xxiii. 4. The blood poured out at the foot of the altar in the temple, as well as other filth, ran by a drain into the brook Kedron, which discharges itself into the Dead Sea; a fact which confutes the notion, that virtue was imparted to the pool of Bethesda from the blood of the sacrifices, as some have supposed. Kedron, as before remarked, has now but a small quantity of water, and is often quite dry; but after storms, or heavy falls of rain, it runs with great rapidity.

Among the places distinguished by any remarkable occurrence within the limits of the city, and whose true *locale* is thought to warrant their identity, is the Pool of Bethesda, considered to be the only known remnant which exists of Jerusalem as it appeared in the days of Solomon. Here was said

to the paralytic man, "Take up thy bed and walk." The walls are of great antiquity, and supposed to be the work of the primitive Jews. Tradition points out the arches, or porches, where the multitude of the infirm once gathered, waiting for the moving of the waters. Travellers vary in their accounts of the length and depth of the pool. Maundrel, who was there in 1597, rated it at one hundred and twenty paces long, forty broad, and eight deep. Sandys, who visited Jerusalem in 1611, describes the appearance of the pool; it is accurate, and will serve, as well as any other, for the present day. "Now it is a great square profundity, green and uneven at the bottom; into which a barren spring doth drill between the stones of the northward wall; and stealeth away almost undiscovered. The place is for a good depth hewn out of the rock; confined above on the north side with a steep wall, on the west with the high buildings, (perhaps a part of the castle of Antonia,* where are two doors to descend by, now all that are, half choked with rubbish,) and on the south the wall of the court of the temple."

There were five porches, according to Scripture, about the pool of Bethesda, which interpreters expound as signifying the "house of mercy," because, as reasonably supposed, the sick who lay under porticoes that surrounded it, here found shelter, waiting to descend into the water when it was stirred; for an angel came down at a certain season and stirred the

* A tower built by Herod the Great, named in honor of Mark Anthony, his friend. It was enclosed by a wall of three hundred cubits high, and stood on the north angle of the temple. It was so high, says the Jewish historian, that persons might look from thence into the temple; and there was a covered communication from the one to the other; so that, as the temple was in some sort a citadel to the town, the tower of Antonio was a citadel to the temple. The Roman generals kept a garrison in it; and from hence it was that the tribune ran with his soldiers to rescue Paul out of the hands of the Jews, who had seized him in the temple, and designed to kill him. "And as they went about to kill him, tidings came unto the chief captain of the band, that all Jerusalem was in an uproar; who immediately took soldiers and centurions, and ran down unto them: and when they saw the chief captain and the soldiers, they left beating of Paul."—Acts **xxi.** 31, 32.

water; the first who then plunged into it was cured, be his disease what it might. "For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the waters; whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in, was made whole of whatsoever disease he had."—John v. 4. With regard to the angel here spoken of, a biblical critic makes the following comment:—"It was John's design to relate a miracle wrought by his Master; to honor Jesus, and Jesus solely; he had, therefore, no inducement to allude to any miraculous (angelical, *spiritual*) interference, previous to, or distinct from, that of Jesus; and it is submitted to the reader, whether his words, properly taken, do really import any such interference? especially if we advert to the various senses of the word *angel*, as mentioned in Scripture."

A learned commentator supposed that the blood of the great number of sacrifices which were washed in this pool communicated a salutary efficacy to the water, on its being stirred up by the messenger from the high priest. Dr. Pococke, we are told, was so far captivated with this idea, fanciful as it is, as to seek at Jerusalem for the pool of Bethesda on the wrong side of the city, where it is not, and where it is he could not see it. This obliged the doctor to seek for the pool of Bethesda in lower ground, on the other side of the temple. The error consisted in supposing that the sheep were washed here after they were slain, says Mr. Taylor; whereas, they were washed in it as soon as brought in the adjoining market;—that is, they were driven in, and swam about the pool; there being always a body of water in it sufficient for that purpose; after which they were driven into the temple. Dr. Doddridge has an elaborate note on the history of this "standing miracle," the pool of Bethesda, the virtue of whose healing waters the pious doctor ascribes to the influence of supernatural agency; "an instance," adds Mr. Taylor, "how greatly learning and piety might profit by an intimate acquaintance with *things*, as well as *words*."

Commencing at the gate of St. Stephen, and leading to

Calvary, is the narrow street called by the Turks, Harrat el Allam, or Dolorous Way, (Via Dolorosa.) In this direction we pass the Aga's house, standing on the ruins of Pilate's palace. The hall of judgment is here exhibited, and the place where the cross was kept; mere matters of conjecture. The steps also which led to the hall are pointed out.* Here the place is shown where Jesus was mocked and scourged. "Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified."—Matt. xxvii. 26. The ruined arch of Ecce Homo is pointed out, where, dressed in a purple robe, and crowned with thorns, he was presented to the Jews by Pilate, who exclaimed, "Behold the man!"—John xix. 5. Near this a stone in the wall is shown, marking the place where Christ fell, borne down by the weight of the cross, and the place also where stood Simon the Cyrenian, on whom they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus.—Mark xv. 21. The remains of a church are here seen dedicated to our Lady of Grief, and supposed to be the spot where *Salve Mater* was said to the Virgin. Here, too, are the dwellings of the rich man and Lazarus; and the spot where Jesus, turning unto the company which lamented and bewailed him, said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children."—

* The two remaining steps leading to the judgment hall in Pilate's palace, are called the *Scala Sancta*, or holy stairs. The remaining steps have been removed to Rome. They form the five centre steps of the twenty-eight marble stairs which lead to the chapel of the *Scala Sancta*, and are sanctified in the belief that they were sprinkled with the blood of Christ. The chapel is revered as one of the most sacred in the city of Rome. Here the pilgrim comes to offer devotions. The penance of ascending the stairs is an important ceremony;—the peasants do this on their knees.

We ascended by genuflection, the mode adopted by the humble pilgrim; something of a task for the unpracticed in such acts of devotional penance. There are side-stairs, however, for those to ascend and descend who are less scrupulous in the observance of the duty. Among the relics exhibited in the chapel are the table of the last supper, part of the reed with which Christ was smitten, and a very sacred painting, believed to be a true likeness of the Saviour. This extraordinary work of art was begun by St. Luke, and afterwards miraculously finished for him, so says tradition.

Luke xxiii. 28. A short distance from the tomb of Isaiah, the place is pointed out where the prophet was sawn asunder ; not far from the scene of martyrdom is the pit of Nehemiah, where the priests concealed the holy fire. Every stone has its tradition, and each spot of earth records some event of the past. And who shall dispute these localities ?—who shall gainsay the inventions of the fathers, or disprove the legends of the cloister ?

Various opinions exist as to the true *locale* of remarkable places in the vicinity of Jerusalem, and of those within its walls. The following is Mr. Taylor's distribution of the noted localities, of those most certain, those supposed to be genuine, and those of little or no authority. It is, doubtless, correct in all the essential points. The places distinguished by any remarkable occurrence in the city of Jerusalem, may be distributed into those well ascertained, those credibly supposed to be genuine, and those of little or no authority. Among places the situation of which warrants our dependence, may be reckoned the Temple with its courts, the Pool of Bethesda, the House of Pilate, the Palace of Herod, the Gate of Justice, and the Iron Gate. Most of the places without the city may be considered as certain from their nature ; such as the Mount of Olives, the Brook Kedron, the Pool of Siloam, the Valleys, Calvary, and others. These being natural and permanent objects, cannot have changed their situation at all, nor their form, to any considerable degree. It is also probable that the spot where Stephen is said to have been stoned is near the place where that fact happened ; because he seems to have been led from the presence of the council to the nearest convenient opening without the precincts ; and the council sat not far from the corner of the temple, in the cloisters. The house of Mark, Mr. Taylor thinks, *may* be correct ; and possibly the house of Annas, and of Caiaphas, on Mount Zion, the city of David.

LETTER IX.

Mount Sion, the Holy Hill,—Illustrations from Scripture,—Mosque of David,—Place of the Last Supper, first Christian temple,—Injunction given to the Apostles on Mount Sion,—Sacrament commemorative of the death of Christ instituted on Mount Sion,—seen here by his disciples on the day of his ascension,—House of Caiaphas,—Course of ages altering the general sites and localities of Jerusalem,—Opinion of the Jewish high priest that Christ should die,—Illustrations from Scripture,—Answer to the adjuration of Caiaphas,—Mount Sion and Mount Moriah, distinction between them, not equivalent to each other,—Moriah, one of the four hills on which the city was built,—Whole foundation on a rock called Moriah,—Illustration from Scripture,—Word of God communicated to the sons of men on Mount Moriah,—Sacrifice of Abraham,—Passage from Genesis,—Locale of the Temple of Solomon, bridge erected by that prince,—Walls of the city of Jerusalem,—Natural strength of the Judean capital increased by redoubts and bulwarks,—Towers of observation and annoyance,—Modern walls of the city,—Ground ploughed where the Temple once stood,—Prohibition of the Roman laws.

MOUNT Sion, or the Holy Hill, is one of the mountains on which the city of Jerusalem was built. It is called in Scripture the city of David, because that king took possession of it, and transferred his court hither from Hebron;—it is also called the Holy Hill from the fact, that here the successor of Saul kept the ark of the covenant. “So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obbededom into the city of David with gladness.”—2 Sam. vi. 12.

On the height of Sion, as already mentioned, David's palace was built, where now stands the mosque bearing his name. It is held in great veneration from the tradition that it contains the tomb of king David. The mosque is in no way remarkable for its dimensions or style of architecture. It is pointed out as the ancient church where Christ instituted the last supper,—and the upper story is shown as denoting the place where that ceremony was observed.

History informs us that the place hallowed by the last supper was transformed into the first Christian temple the world ever saw ; where St. James the less was consecrated the first bishop of Jerusalem, and where he presided in the first council of the church.

On Mount Sion the apostles received the injunction to go forth and teach all nations ;—from this spot they departed “ without purse or scrip, to seat their religion upon all the thrones of the earth.” Here the sacrament which commemorates the death of Christ was instituted ; here he was seen by his disciples at the hour of his ascension.

On Mount Sion are shown the ruins of the house of Caiaphas, the high priest of the Jews.* When the priests deliberated on the seizure and death of Jesus, Caiaphas told them there was no room for debate on that matter :—“ And one of them named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.”—John xi. 49, 50. The words of the high priest on this occasion, are considered a sort of prophecy ; importing,—though not the intention of the speaker,—that the death of Jesus would be the salvation of the world. After Christ was betrayed he was sent bound to Caiaphas. Certain false witnesses being found insufficient to justify sentence of death against him, and Jesus continuing silent, Caiaphas, as high priest, adjured him by the living God to say whether he were the Christ, the Son of

* The reader will bear in mind, as before remarked, that many of the relics and hallowed spots that are pointed out by the monkish guides are mere matters of conjecture. It has been observed, that in the course of so many ages during which Jerusalem has existed, the buildings, their foundations, repairs and alterations,—the sieges which the city has suffered ; its repeated conflagrations, and its numerous changes, both public and private, have so altered the site, the declivities, and the risings on which it stands, that probably neither Herod nor Caiaphas, and certainly neither David nor Solomon, could they now inspect it, would recollect the very ground on which the palaces stood, or which they labored to honor or adorn ;—always excepting the temple.

God. Jesus having answered to this adjuration in the affirmative, Caiaphas rent his clothes, and declared him to be worthy of death.

Mount Sion and Mount Moriah have been often used as meaning one and the same place : a marked distinction separates them ; the former is distinguished as the city of David, the latter as the city of Jerusalem ;—the one as being the seat of the kingly office, the other as being the seat of the national worship. “It is proper, therefore,” observes a theological writer, “strongly to urge the distinction between them ; and how frequently soever they may be associated by the sacred historians, after the time of David, yet they are not the same ; neither are they, strictly taken, equivalent to each other ; but are distinct, though combined.”

Moriah is one of the four hills on which the city of Jerusalem was built. The whole foundation was on a high rock called Moriah or Vision, because it could be seen afar off, especially on the south.—Gen. xxii. 2—4. The prophet is supposed to allude to this elevation,—of being seen afar off,—in the following passage :—“And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established at the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills ; and all nations shall flow unto it.”—Isaiah ii. 2.

Mount Moriah was one of those places esteemed sacred ; a spot where the word of God was communicated to the sons of men. Some interpreters have doubted whether this mount be that on which Abraham offered up his son Isaac. The passage from Genesis is supposed to corroborate the fact : “And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt offering, upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.”—Gen. xxii. 2.

On this elevation Solomon erected the temple, as recorded in the second of Chronicles, third chapter, first verse. A shallow vale now separates Mount Moriah from Mount Sion.

In order to connect them, Solomon raised a bridge or causeway which crossed the valley of the two mountains, and led from the royal palace to the temple.

When the Judean capital became the chosen place of the true worship of Jehovah, it was encompassed with high walls, with strong gates, and with towers for observation and annoyance. In its most flourishing condition the city was divided into four parts, each enclosed with its own walls. The Jewish-historian has given a particular description of the walls and fortifications of the city of Jerusalem at the period of its destruction by Titus.

Tacitus, a Roman and military man, relates that Jerusalem stood upon an eminence difficult of approach. The natural strength of the place was increased by redoubts and bulwarks, which, even on the level plain, would have made it secure from insult. Two hills that rose to a prodigious height were enclosed by walls constructed with skill, with the angles so formed that the besiegers were always liable to be annoyed in flank. Near the summit towers were raised sixty feet high, and others on the declivity rose no less than one hundred and twenty feet.

The modern walls have no ditch except the natural valleys beneath them. They are built of reddish stone on an average of about fifty feet in height. The eastern wall runs along the brow of Mount Moriah, beneath which lies the valley of Jehosaphat. The southern wall crosses the summit of Mount Sion with Hinnom at its base. The western and northern walls are considered to be the most modern, portions of which were erected and repaired by Solyman the Magnificent, in the sixteenth century. These walls are flanked at equal distances by square towers, and have battlements along their summits, with loop holes for arrows or musketry at the top. The entire walls of the city may be walked round at a moderate pace in something less than an hour. The old Jewish wall is supposed to compose the south-east angle, which contains ancient stones, some of which are over twenty

feet in length. The eastern side of the wall, running in a direct line along the brow of Mount Moriah, parallel with the valley of Jehosaphat, is estimated to be one hundred feet in height. The blocks are handsomely cut, and of remarkable size; several measured twenty-two feet in length by four in height. Some have supposed that they belonged to the Jewish temple. It will be remembered, our Saviour doomed that pile to utter destruction; and it is recorded that "the ploughshare passed over the beauty of that house."

History relates that Terentius Rufus, whom Titus left in command, ploughed up the ground on which the temple had stood, that it might not be rebuilt; the Roman laws prohibited the rebuilding of places where this ceremony had been performed, without permission from the senate.

LETTER X.

Toils and sufferings of the early pilgrims,—Effect of the crusades in the attempt to rescue the sepulchre of Christ,—United war against the Mahommedan states in Syria, dictated by political wisdom,—Universal dominion in the West the object of the Turks,—Crusades not a mob of armed pilgrims,—Point at issue, which of the two religions shall predominate, the Christian or the Mahommedan,—Privation and fatigue for the sake of religion,—First pilgrimages to the Holy Land,—Passion for relics and memorials,—Willibald, the Saxon; his erratic propensity,—The pilgrim Bernard; his imprisonment and release,—"Infidel dogs," the epithet applied to Christians,—Broquiere; his account of Turkish despotism,—Caravan of camels,—The Koran,—Pilgrimage to Mecca, its absolution,—Christians carried into slavery, yoked like oxen to the plough,—Old Sandy's description of Jerusalem,—Maundrel and Pococke,—Writers on Palestine,—Modern tourists,—Facility of travel, its safety at the present day,—Opposition on the part of the natives,—Annoyances,—Plagues of Egypt,—Bethlehem,—

A TRAVELLER at the present day meets with few of the dangers and difficulties which the earlier pilgrims had to encounter in their journeyings through the countries of Palestine. Few Christians would now be found within the walls of the Holy City were they subjected to the toils and sufferings which

the primitive followers of the cross were compelled to endure for the privilege of beholding the memorials of the crucifixion.

The first pilgrimages to the Holy Land, and the effect of the crusades in the attempt to rescue the sepulchre of Christ from the hands of the Infidels, are known to readers of history.*

In his work on Palestine, Mr. Russell has given a brief history of the early adventurers, who, from motives of curiosity or for the sake of religion, encountered the perils of a journey to Jerusalem. In the chapter on this subject, we are informed that the holy places were first visited in the beginning of the eighth century, and that the traveller who saw the Judean capital at this period was a mere enthusiast. Some spots and buildings he describes with considerable minuteness ; but he was mostly fascinated with relics and memorials ; these he handled and kissed with the greatest reverence. He mentions having seen the cup used at the last supper, the sponge on which the vinegar was poured, the spear which pierced the side of Jesus, the cloth in which he was wrapped, and the cloth woven by the Virgin Mary, whereon were represented the figures of the Saviour and of the twelve Apostles. This devout pilgrim, whose name was Arculfus, was

* We are convinced that, in the peculiar circumstances of the Christian world when Peter the Hermit called its chief to arms, a united war against the Mahomedan states of Syria was dictated by the soundest political wisdom. The subjects of Omar had already conquered an establishment in Sicily and Spain, and attempted the subjugation of France. Their views were directed towards universal dominion in the West, as well as in the East ; they hoped to witness the triumph of the crescent in Europe not less certainly than in Asia, and to be able to impose a tribute on the worshippers of Christ, or compel them to relinquish their creed on the remotest shores of the Atlantic. Those, therefore, who perceive in the crusades nothing but a mob of armed pilgrims running to rescue a tomb in Palestine, must take a very limited view of history. The point in question was not merely the recovery of that sacred building from the hands of Infidels, but rather to decide which of the two religions, the Christian, or the Mahomedan, should predominate in the world ; the one hostile to civilization, and only favorable to ignorance, despotism, and slavery ; the other friendly to improvement, learning, and freedom in all ranks and conditions of society.—*Miller's History of the Crusades.*

followed by Willibald, a Saxon, who, some eight years later, prompted by the same motives, undertook the same journey. From his infancy, we are told, he had been distinguished by a sage and pious disposition ; and on emerging from boyhood he was seized with an anxious desire to try, as he expressed it, " the unknown ways of peregrination, to cross over the huge wastes of ocean to the ends of the earth." To this erratic propensity he is said to owe all the fame which a place in the Romish Calendar and the authorship of an indifferent book can confer. In Jerusalem, he saw all that Arculfus saw, and nothing more ; but he had previously visited the tomb of the Seven Sleepers, and the cave in which St. John wrote the Apocalypse. About a century after this, the pilgrim Bernard undertook a journey to the Holy Land, first landing at Alexandria, in Egypt, where he was compelled to pay tribute. On arriving at Grand Cairo he was thrown into prison ; here, it is related of him, he asked counsel of God, who miraculously interposed for his relief by revealing to him that thirteen denarii, such as he presented to the other Mussulman, would procure him his liberty. It turned out so ; he was not only liberated, but received a firman which exempted him from farther imposition. These, and the like reverses, attended the pilgrimages to the Holy Land both before and after the war of the crusades.

After the Saracens recovered the possession of Jerusalem, foreign Christians visiting the Holy City were subjected to increased difficulties and dangers, and were treated as " Infidel dogs,"—the appellation by which the followers of the cross were distinguished.

In the beginning of the fifteenth century, the next traveller of note who visited the Judean capital was the famous Broquiere, who, on his arrival at Jerusalem, found the Christians reduced to the utmost extremity. Those who were engaged in trade, according to his story, were locked up in their shops every night by Saracens, who opened the doors in the morning at such an hour as seemed to them most proper or convenient.

When he entered Damascus they knocked him down; he could not complain, for it was thought a merit to take the life of a Christian. He speaks of the arrival of a caravan, consisting of more than three thousand camels, the entrance of which into the city employed two days and two nights. This, however, was no uncommon occurrence, as will be seen when we invite the reader to accompany us to Damascus. The ceremony is still observed of wrapping the Koran* in silk, and carrying it in front, on the back of a camel richly adorned with the same material. Broquiere was told by one in authority, that no one who had performed a pilgrimage to Mecca, need fear the pains of everlasting damnation. The same saving grace is yet extended to those who endure peril and privation for the privilege of kneeling at the shrine of the prophet. About a century after Broquiere's time, journeyings were achieved into the Holy Land, but the same toil and dangers attended the way of the Christian pilgrim. The followers of the cross were then carried into slavery by the Turks, and treated with the utmost severity. A traveller who visited Palestine at the period now referred to gives a melancholy account of the sufferings of the Christians who were carried into slavery by the Turks. Men of rank, and those of the learned professions of the Christian faith, were subjected to the severest trials. They were not only compelled to the lowest labor of the field, but to work like oxen, being yoked like these animals to the plough. It was recommended to every one visiting those parts to make his will, "like one not going to the earthly, but to the heavenly Jerusalem."

We now come to the period when a more intelligent order of travellers hazarded the tour of the Holy Land. In the beginning of the seventeenth century George Sandys com-

* Burckhardt saw a copy of the Koran the leaves of which were four feet long and more than two feet and a half broad. Tradition reports that it belonged to the Caliph Omar; he saw a similar one at Cairo, and another at Mecca, to both of which the same origin is assigned.

† Old Sandys, as he is familiarly called, was an exact and very amusing writer. His style is characterized for its simplicity and quaint form of ex-

menced his journeying East, and is regarded as the first writer who furnished what is considered a correct sketch of the Holy Land. Among the most distinguished who followed Sandys, were Maundrell, Pococke, and others of equal note, who contributed largely towards a better knowledge of the present condition of Palestine.

To the enterprising authors of the nineteenth century, adds our historian, the public are indebted for the information now enjoyed by every class of readers, in regard to the most interesting of all ancient kingdoms,—the country inhabited by Israel and Judah.

We before remarked that the perils encountered by modern travellers in achieving the tour of the Holy Land, are hardly to be mentioned when contrasted with the toils and sufferings of those who attempted the same journey at earlier periods. Who now hears of Christians being sold to slavery, beaten with rods, and yoked like oxen to the plough? A foreigner now passes with as much safety through the dominions of the Turk, as he would through most European countries. The mountain recesses of Spain afford less protection to the traveller than the ravines of Lebanon from Jaffa to Jerusalem. We felt more security in the streets of Damascus or of Alexandria, at midnight, than in any of the public squares of Lisbon at that hour. We encountered an English traveller on horseback, on our way to Damascus; he was without servant or guide, pursuing his route for Baalbec, a distance of some thirty miles from our point of meeting, and through a dreary

pression. His description of Jerusalem may be quoted as a sample:—"This citie, once sacred and glorious, elected by God for his seate, and seated in the midst of nations,—like a diadem crowning the head of the mountains,—the theatre of mysteries and miracles,—was founded by Melchisedek, (who is said to be the son of Noah, and that not improbably,) about the year of the world 2023, and called Salem, (by the Gentiles Solyma,) which signifyeth peace, who reigned here fifty years. This citie is situated on a rockie mountaine; every way to be ascended, (except a little on the north,) with steep ascents and deep valleys naturally fortified; for the most part environed with other not far removed mountains, as if placed in the midst of an amphitheatre."

desert. He continued on in safety and without interruption, and soon after joined our party at Jaffa.

We crossed the mountains of Lebanon in three different directions; once from Jaffa to Jerusalem, once from Beyrout to the ruins of Baalbec, and subsequently from the same place to Damascus, and without any annoyance. We had guides, of course; but their escort would have availed us little in case of an attack on the part of the natives of the surrounding deserts. On our return from an excursion to Bethlehem we encountered something like opposition on the part of the natives,—an incident which we have elsewhere noticed. With this exception, we passed with little interruption, save the attacks of certain nimble adversaries, which at times seemed to fill the air, and to infest the sands of the desert. They assailed us on all quarters, and appeared to augment in numbers as we moved from place to place.

Speaking of the reptiles, flies, and other more nauseous vermin known in various countries in the East, Dr. Clarke describes a singular species of lizard which made its appearance in Cairo, having circular membranes at the extremity of its feet, which gave it such tenacity, that it walked upon windows, panes of glass, or upon the surface of pendant mirrors. This revolting sight was common in every apartment, whether in the houses of the rich or the poor. At the same time such a plague of flies covered all things with their swarms, that it was impossible to eat without having persons to stand by every table with flappers, to drive them away. Certain winds cover the sands of the desert with a still more nauseous insect. Sir Sidney Smith, apprehending the effects of sleeping a night in the village, prepared a bed in the adjoining desert, but so far from escaping the evil he had dreaded, he found himself in the morning entirely covered with that mysterious plague over which the magicians of Pharaoh had no power.*

The reader will now follow us to Bethlehem, the appearances and localities of which will form the subject of the next letter.

* Manners and Customs of the Egyptians.

LETTER XI.

American missionaries at Jerusalem,—Protestant burial-place,—Road to Bethlehem,—Tower of Simeon,—Illustration from Scripture,—Tomb of Rachel,—Lamentations of mothers in Bethlehem,—Convent of St. Elias,—Lawless Arab hordes, connivance of government at their acts of violence,—Assault on Sir F. Henniker,—Wild and gloomy solitudes,—Good Samaritan, the beauty of that story,—City of David,—Franciscan convent,—Chapel of the Nativity,—Traffickers in shells, crosses, &c.,—View from the church,—Bethlehem, its appearance on entering the town, prospect from its heights,—Cave of the nativity, its identity established.

DURING our stay in Jerusalem we received many kind attentions from the American missionaries residing in that place. Speaking the language of the country, and being familiar with its localities and traditions, every facility was afforded us which could gratify the curiosity of travellers surrounded by objects and scenes calculated to awaken in the bosom of the Christian the deepest and most lasting impressions.

While at Jerusalem the commander of the American squadron was informed that no burial-place, as yet, was set apart for the Protestants. The embarrassments which this prohibition caused this class of Christians often became painful in the extreme. A favorable moment was taken to state the case to Mahomet Ali, who declined acting on his own responsibility, but, at the same time, suggested the propriety of procuring a firman from the sultan at Constantinople. The grant was probably obtained, or what was equivalent, Mahomet Ali lent his aid to procure one. The bones of the Protestant Christian may now find a resting-place in the land of his pilgrimage, amidst the places of his devotion.

It has been remarked, that no traveller of any nation, whatever may be his creed or his impressions in regard to the gospel, who does not make the usual journey from the Jewish capital to the place of our Lord's nativity.

A barren, rocky road, with here and there a patch of cultivated earth, leads to Bethlehem, a place second only in interest to the Judean capital itself. It stands upon an eminence, and is situated about two leagues south-east from Jerusalem. In this direction the traveller is shown a few traditionary memorials, such as the ruined tower of Simeon, the pious old man to whom it was revealed that he should not die before he had seen the infant Messiah. "And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Ghost was upon him. And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came by the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word—for mine eyes have seen thy salvation."—Luke ii. 25, 30.

A short distance from the tower just mentioned, stands the sepulchral monument which tradition points out as the tomb of Rachel. The building is a sort of Turkish structure and evidently of no antiquity.* Not far from this is the Greek convent of St. Elias, where travellers are hospitably entertained. After leaving the convent the road becomes more hilly, and the country round exhibits better signs of cultivation. Before we arrived at Bethlehem, we encountered a party of armed Turks on their return from a scouring expedition in the interior. The lawless Arab hordes who refuse to

* In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not."—Matthew ii. 18. This was fulfilled, when the tribes were carried into captivity beyond the Euphrates; but Matthew has accommodated the words to the lamentations of mothers in Bethlehem, when Herod slew their children. Then Rachel, who was buried there, might be said to renew her cries and lamentations for the death of so many infant innocents, sacrificed to his jealousy and cruelty!—*Calmet*.

pay tribute, are with difficulty kept in subjection. These plunderers of the desert dwell amidst the wilds of the solitudes, and set all law at defiance. But wherever the power of Mahomet Ali extends, and it reaches almost everywhere in Syria, protection is afforded to the European traveller. Notwithstanding this, we hear of assaults made upon travellers by thieves, who infest the gloomy track between Jericho and the Dead Sea, which has led some to suspect, and with reason, that the government at Jerusalem connive at such instances of violence to enhance the value of the protection which they sell at such a very dear rate to the Christian traveller. It was on the desolate route just mentioned that Sir F. Henniker, a few years since, was wounded and robbed by a horde of savage Bedouins.* The whole of the road is considered the most dangerous in all Palestine. The gloomy

* This traveller gives the following account of his rencontre with this savage horde :—"The route is over hills, rocky, barren, and uninteresting. The day was so hot that I was anxious to finish the journey, and hasten forwards. A ruined building, situated on the summit of a hill, was now within sight, and I urged my horse towards it; the janizary galloped by me, and making signs to me not to precede him, he himself rode into and round the building, and then motioned me to advance. We next came to a hill, through the very apex of which has been cut a passage, the rocks overhanging it on either side. I was in the act of passing through this ditch, when a bullet whizzed by close to my head. I saw no one, and had scarcely time to think, when another was fired, some short distance in advance. I could yet see no one; the janizary was beneath the brow of the hill in his descent. I looked back, but my servant was not yet within sight. I looked up, and within a few inches of my head were three muskets, and three men taking aim at me. Escape or resistance was alike impossible. I got off my horse. Eight men jumped down from the rocks, and commenced a scramble for me. As he (the janizary) passed, I caught at a rope hanging from his saddle; I had hoped to leap upon his horse, but found myself unable; my feet were dreadfully lacerated by the honey-combed rocks; nature would support me no longer; I fell, but still clung to the rope; in this manner I was drawn some few yards, till, bleeding from my ankle to my shoulder, I resigned myself to my fate. As soon as I stood up, one of my pursuers took aim at me; but the other, casually advancing between us, prevented his firing. He then ran up, and with his sword, aimed such a blow as would not have required a second; his companion prevented its full effect, so that it merely cut my ear in halves, and laid open one side of my face; they then stripped me naked."

solitude of the place recalls the touching story of compassion as recorded in St. Luke. "And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance there came down a certain priest that way ; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was : and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, and went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him."—Luke x. 30—34.

The remark is true, that one must be in the midst of these wild and gloomy solitudes, surrounded by an armed band, and feel the impatience of the traveller who rushes on to catch a new view at every pass and turn ; one must be alarmed at the very stamp of the horses' hoofs, resounding through the caverned rocks, and at the savage shouts of the footmen, scarcely less loud than the echoing thunder produced by the discharge of their pieces in the valleys ; one must witness all this upon the spot, before that the full force and beauty of the admirable story of the good Samaritan can be perceived.*

Bethlehem, or the city of David, leads us back to the youthful days of the monarch of Israel, when, amidst these hills and valleys as shepherd boy he fed his father's flock. It was from these fields he was called forth to meet Goliath, as he filled his scrip with the five smooth stones which he had gathered from the brook.

The convent of the Franciscans, where we halted, forms an extensive building, in shape of a Latin cross. Before the church was robbed by the Turks, the interior was considered to be unrivalled in point of magnificence and beauty. The roof, which is supported by fifty marble columns, is said to be

* Buckingham's Travels.

constructed of the cedar of Lebanon. The cupola is richly ornamented with figures of mosaic work. Beneath the church of St. Mary, erected by the Empress Helena, the birthplace of the Messiah is pointed out. A narrow flight of steps leads to the subterranean chamber, or Chapel of Nativity, where lamps are kept continually burning. Near the manger, which appears to be hewn from the natural rock, is the star with the circular inscription :—

Hic de Virgine Maria Jesus Christus natus est.
Here Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary.

A similar inscription is preserved in the convent of St. John in the desert. The spot where the Baptist is supposed to have been born, is marked with a star, encircled with the words :—

Hic precursor Domini Christi natus est.
Here the forerunner of the Lord Christ was born.

Contiguous to the Cave of the Nativity is the Chapel of the Innocents, where credulity is gratified with the sight of a few relics; among them, as our pious guide assured us, were the fingers of one of the slaughtered infants. The priests tell us that the cell which we enter in this direction is that which was occupied by St. Jerome, while engaged in translating the Bible. A portrait of the saint hangs in the niche. We were led through these different passages underground, by the gleam of a small taper of wax, which for a fee paid the priest we were permitted to keep. This little candle, he assured us, if lighted in the chamber of a dying person, possessed the efficacy of conducting the spirit to the abodes of the blest.

On leaving the convent, we were surrounded by traffickers in shells, crosses, rosaries, and various trinkets manufactured from mother of pearl, and the seed of the Jerusalem olive tree. These are blest by the priest at the place of the Holy Sepulchre, and afterwards worn as precious memorials.

From the top of the church the eye roams over an extensive scenery of valley and hill. In this view are embraced

many of the most interesting localities of the Holy Land. Here are pointed out the Tekoa and the Engedi of Scripture. At the latter place, the grotto is shown where David, hid in a cave among the rocks of the wild goats, cut off the skirts of Saul's garment. "And the men of David said unto him, Behold the day of which the Lord said unto thee, Behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand, that thou mayest do unto him as it shall seem good unto thee. Then David arose, and cut off the skirt of Saul's robe privily."—1 Sam. xxiv. 4.

Here are the fields where the shepherds, during the watches of the night, listened to the songs of the angels announcing the Messiah's birth. Near the pastures of the shepherds the monks show a grotto where, they say, the mother of Jesus with the infant Messiah were concealed. previous to their flight into Egypt.

Approaching Bethlehem, its aspect is less forbidding than that usually presented on entering a Turkish town. The houses are all low and flat-roofed, with flights of stone steps on the outside, leading to the interior. The streets are wider and in better condition than those commonly found among the Turks. Vineyards and plantations of the fig and olive tree were plentifully scattered along the neighborhood. The town is built on the ridge of a hill which overlooks the valley, reaching to the Dead Sea, of which it commands a distinct prospect; so that any phenomenon elevated above Bethlehem, as Dr. Clarke observes, would be seen from afar in the East country, beyond the Dead Sea.

We shall subsequently advert to several interesting localities connected with the birth-place of David. We close with briefly remarking that no skepticism hangs over the Cave of the Nativity. From the primitive ages of Christianity to the present day, its identity has never been doubted. The spot where Jesus Christ was born, as Dr. Clarke asserts, could never be mistaken or forgotten by his followers.

LETTER XII.

Holy Sepulchre, its identity denied by the Mahometans,—Moslem tradition of Judas,—Emotions on arriving at the Grotto of the Nativity,—Temple of Adonis, site of the present Christian church,—Separate places for worship,—Disgraceful contentions among the different sects,—Mummers at Easter Eve,—Privilege of saying mass contended for, sword in hand,—Disturbances during service,—Chapel of the Nativity,—Character of Herod,—Grotto of the Nativity,—Altar of the Wise Men,—Star seen by the Magi,—Illustrations from Scripture,—Tradition of the ten stalls,—Caves of the oriental nations used as habitations, their use in our Saviour's time.

THE Turks acknowledge the identity of the spot where our Saviour was born, though they ridicule the tradition which points to the Holy Sepulchre as the place of his interment. The tomb of Christ is not acknowledged by the Mahometans, though they say prayers in all the holy places consecrated to the memory of Jesus Christ and the Virgin. They have a tradition that Jesus Christ did not die, but that he ascended alive into heaven, leaving the likeness of his face to Judas, who was condemned to die for him, and that in consequence, Judas having been crucified, his body might have been contained in this sepulchre, but not that of Jesus Christ. It is for this reason that the followers of the prophet do not perform any act of devotion at the monument, and that they ridicule the Christians who go to revere it.

Arriving at the church which contains the Grotto of the Nativity, a feeling was expressed by the party to send to friends in distant lands a few short words written upon the spot designated as the birth-place of the Messiah. It was a feeling which the objects and scenes around us were calculated to awaken,—and we were desirous, if possible, that others should participate in the enjoyment of it. The same emotion will touch the heart of every Christian traveller, as he enters these sacred precincts, as he treads this holy earth where

“Emmanuel, having laid aside his glory. first appeared in the garb of human nature.”

The church which marks the place of the Saviour's nativity was erected by the Empress Helena upon the spot where stood the temple of Adonis, originally built by Hadrian, from the feeling of hatred and contempt for the followers of the cross. The pious empress ordered the idolatrous structure to be destroyed which had desecrated the place of the Messiah's birth. The Greek, Roman, and Armenian sects have places of worship assigned to them, where, on certain days, they repair to kneel and pray at their appropriate altars. It is true, however, that the same animosity which attends the claims of the different sects for the possession of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, is exhibited in the conduct of those who claim the Grotto of the Nativity at Bethlehem.

One who was present at a Christmas festival speaks of a battle which took place when several of the combatants were wounded, and others severely beaten. On one occasion the privilege of saying mass at the altar, on that particular day, was contended for at the very door of the sanctuary with sword in hand. Well may the Moslem scoff—adds an eyewitness of such a scene,—well may the infidel point the finger of scorn, at such Christianity as this, which resembles more the rites of Hindoo superstition than the solemn worship of a Christian temple. It has been said with truth that the precincts of an idol sanctuary seldom enclose an assemblage of worse and more unholy passions than are here concentrated upon the very spot where the Messiah, the Prince of Peace, was born. The most intense hatred and spirit of rivalry exist among the various sects professing to be Christians, who take every opportunity of slandering each other. Each endeavors to bribe the Turk to oppress the other, and were it not for the iron hand which keeps them down, they would tear one another to pieces.

The same unhallowed discord, as before remarked, disgraces the service at Easter Eve, in the church of the Holy

Sepulchre at Jerusalem. On this occasion all sorts of mummeries are enacted, resembling more the noises of Babel than the devotions of Christians met for the purposes of solemn worship. A late traveller gives the following spirited sketch of the scenes he witnessed during the service of the crucifixion ;—" It was the Roman Catholic service that was performed this evening, to which those of other persuasions paid no attention whatever ; on the contrary, they seemed bent upon disturbance, talking, walking about, yelling, screaming, making every possible noise that could desecrate the spot. The lash, too, of the Turkish whip, laid on with no lenient hand by the Janissaries appointed to preserve order, perpetually resounded through the church ; and they also joined in the work of desecration, rushing in, as the officiating priest waved the censers of incense, and sprinkled rose-water over the image of Christ, to catch it in their hands in order to perfume their beards. Was it possible that all this was done upon the very spot where the Son of God, as on this very day, poured forth his atoning blood, and taught those heavenly lessons of peace and love with which his gospel abounds ? * * * * How long shall it be before this wilderness shall blossom like the rose beneath the unobscured beams of the Sun of Righteousness ? Surely the curse of the Almighty does visibly rest upon Jerusalem ; it is accursed alike in Christian, Jew and Gentile !"

After descending the narrow flight of steps which leads to the Chapel of the Nativity, the priest points out the tomb, or subterraneous chapel, already referred to, where, as tradition says, were buried the infants slaughtered by the edict of Herod.*

* Josephus thus sums up the character of Herod, surnamed the Great :—" He was a man universally cruel, and of an ungovernable anger ; and though he trampled justice under foot, he was ever the favorite of fortune. From a private station he rose to the throne. Beset on every side with a thousand dangers, he escaped them all ; and prolonged his life to the full boundary of old age. They who considered what befell him in the bosom of his own family, pronounced him a man most miserable ; but to himself he

The Grotto of the Nativity,—the roof of which is supported by a single pillar,—is of small dimensions. It is computed to be thirty-seven feet six inches in length, eleven feet three inches broad, and nine feet in height, and occupies the site of the stable and the manger. An altar is erected over the spot where the Messiah was born; this spot is denoted by a radiant star of agate and jasper, with the inscription already mentioned.—The interior of the cave, or crypt, receives no other light than that shed from the silver lamps,—thirty-two in number,—said to have been sent by princes from different parts of the Christian world. Near the altar just mentioned, the lowly bed or manger is pointed out in which the infant Jesus was laid. On this, large silver candlesticks are placed, with wax tapers perpetually burning. Near this is the Altar of the Wise Men, commemorating the spot where the Magi stood who came to adore the infant Jesus at Bethlehem. “Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of Herod the king, behold there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born king of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east and are come to worship him.”—Matt. ii. 1, 2. In another direction is the star, inlaid in the floor, marking the place directly over which the supernatural sign in the heavens became visible to the Wise Men who came from the East to worship him who was born king of the Jews.* From these subterranean chambers

ever seemed most prosperous, for, of all his enemies, there was not one whom he did not overcome.” Such is the history of a prince, whose name is familiar to us from our childhood, as the first persecutor of our blessed Lord, and the murderer of the infants at Bethlehem. It has been justly remarked, that the account given of the transactions in Herod’s life will evince, that if, according to the judgment of the world, he who reigns splendidly and fortunately, in spite of all the difficulties opposed to his government, be entitled to the attribute of greatness, that appellation has not been unjustly bestowed upon Herod.

* Calmet is of opinion that the star seen by the Magi was an inflamed meteor, in the middle of the air, which having been observed by them to be attended with miraculous and extraordinary circumstances, was taken for the star so long foretold by Balaam; and that, afterwards, they resolved to fol-

the traveller is conducted to the adjoining chapel, where ten recesses are pointed out, which, according to tradition, were the ten stalls occupied by oxen at the time of the Messiah's birth.

We have observed that the identity of the spot which marks the birth-place of the Saviour has never been doubted; although, as correctly remarked, an European, on first beholding it, is apt to be incredulous. For it is a cave, and we in America and Europe regard a stable as some sort of building above ground. A farther acquaintance with the customs of the East, will convince the inquiring traveller that what at first raised his doubts, ought in fact to strengthen his belief. Caves, among the oriental nations, are used at the present day as habitations both for man and beast; and that adherence to ancient customs, which has gained for them the appellation of "never changing East," argues the probability of similar usage in our Saviour's time.*

low it, and to seek the new-born king whose advent it declared. It was, therefore, as he thinks, a light that moved in the air, before them, something like the pillar of cloud in the desert.

* Buckingham's Travels.

LETTER XIII.

Interesting associations,—Bethlehem, a pastoral and fertile country, primitive manners of the inhabitants,—Ancient pasture grounds still in use,—Early recollections of David, his employment as shepherd boy,—Shepherds of Judea, their character and manners, differing from those of other countries,—David taken from the sheep-cotes,—Illustration from Scripture,—Peculiarity of the shepherd's life, illustrating many passages in Scripture,—Accuracy in distinguishing one sheep from another,—Watchful care of the shepherd,—Illustration from Scripture,—The good shepherd that lays down his life for the sheep,—The bad shepherd that enters not by the door of the sheep-fold,—Pastors and shepherds, fulness of the meaning which they express,—Intimacy between a minister and his people compared to the Eastern shepherd,—Employments of a pastoral life thought honorable in the days of the patriarchs,—Princes of Judah; down to the meanest family in Benjamin, all agriculturists or shepherds,—Gideon a thresher of wheat when elected to be the deliverer of his people,—The hospitable old man at Gibeah, a laborer in the corn-field,—Boaz with his reapers,—Saul coming after the herd out of the field when told the dangers that threatened the people of Jabesh-Gilead,—David a keeper of sheep when summoned before Samuel to be anointed king,—Ground of preëminence,—Annunciation of the angels,—Syrian goat and sheep,—The wild ass, description from Job.

MANY interesting associations connect the village of Bethlehem with the pages of Scripture. Here, as already observed, the shepherds watched their flocks by night when the angels announced to them the birth of the Messiah. It was truly a pastoral country, and one of the most fertile spots in all Judea. Even at the present time it exhibits something of the primitive manners and rustic simplicity which characterized the place in the days of the youthful David. The ancient pasture grounds are still appropriated to the feeding of sheep, and there the shepherds encamp with their little families, reminding us of those simple habits and customs of the East to which such frequent allusion is made in the writings of the Psalmist. The monarch of Israel in the fulness of his power seems to have carried with him the recollections of

his early employments, when, as shepherd boy, he tended his father's flock. Though called to act in higher and more important scenes, the impressions of his youthful days were never forgotten.—David was a shepherd, but his employment as such differed essentially from those of the same calling in other countries. It has been remarked that shepherds of Judea were, and are now, a very different class of beings from those who bear the same name in Europe.

David afterwards changed his character from the humble to the royal shepherd;—he is alluded to in this sense, “Now therefore so shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I took thee from the sheep-cotes, from following the sheep, to be a ruler—royal shepherd—over my people, over Israel.”—2 Sam. vii. 8.

The habits and peculiarities of the shepherd's life illustrate many passages in Scripture, which, to those unacquainted with the manners and customs of the East, lose half their force and beauty. The shepherd in Palestine may be said to live among his flocks;—where they go, he goes; his very infants, as Mr. Buckingham says, know the sheep, as it were, personally, call them by name, and are strongly attached to them; and no wonder; for their father's flock is their little world. The shepherd himself knows each sheep individually, by its countenance or voice. This seems strange to us, to whom the faces of the sheep seem pretty much alike, to witness the proofs of this particular and individual knowledge of one from another. A hundred sheep are brought to a shepherd, and he is able to find any particular one he wishes, and point it out with readiness. A shepherd when blindfolded can tell his sheep by the different sounds of their voices—an experiment which Mr. Buckingham mentions having himself witnessed.

The watchful care of the shepherd in feeding his flock, and carrying the tender lambs in his bosom, is beautifully illustrated in the passage from Isa. xl. 2 :—“He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are

with young." The good shepherd is the title which our Saviour takes upon himself ;—he is called the great shepherd of the sheep by Paul ;—another apostle gives him the appellation of chief of shepherds. " And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."—1 Peter v. 4. Christ says that the good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep ; that he knows them, and they know him ; that they hear his voice, and follow him ; that he goes before them, and he calls them by their names.

These, however, are by no means so striking illustrations to us, as they were to those who were familiar with the incidents taken from the customs of the country, and who heard the words of our Saviour. The bad shepherd forsakes the sheep, and the thief enters not by the door of the sheep-fold, but climbs in another way, to steal, to kill and destroy. A traveller, who was familiar with the customs and habits of the Eastern nations, has the following appropriate reflections on this subject. Referring to the passage in Isaiah illustrating the character of the good shepherd, he says—" No one can fully appreciate all the beauty and force of the figure here employed, who has not been in the land of the East ; and when the ministers of Christ are called pastors, and shepherds of the sheep, there is a fulness of meaning comprised in the term to which those who dwell in other countries must remain comparative strangers. It seems at once to settle a question, which has sometimes been raised, as to the degree of association and intimacy which ought to subsist between a minister and his people. If he is to be to them what an Eastern shepherd is to the flock committed to his care, then certainly no association can be too frequent, no intimacy can be too close ; he should know them each one personally, and be acquainted if it were possible with their inmost heart. When Jesus Christ says, ' I am the good shepherd,' he says all that language can express, and comprises in one word, a whole world of meaning."

In drawing attention to the subject of the present letter we

have departed somewhat from the course marked out in the commencement of this work. It will be recollected, however, the early history of the shepherds of Judea is connected with many important events recorded in Scripture. The subject is interesting to readers of the Bible, inasmuch as an acquaintance with the pastoral habits of the East, as before remarked, leads to a better understanding of many striking passages in the sacred writings, which otherwise would lose much of their force and beauty.

The honors arising from mere wealth or profession were unknown during the period of the Hebrew judges. The employment of a pastoral life was thought honorable in the days of the patriarchs. No grade or condition excluded a man from the occupation of a shepherd;—hence, it has been remarked, from the princes of Judea down to the meanest family in Benjamin, all were agriculturists or shepherds, driving their own oxen, or attending in person to their sheep and their goats.

When the angel announced to Gideon that he had been elected to be the deliverer of his people, he was threshing wheat with his own hands, by the wine-press.—Judges vi. 11. The hospitable old man at Gibeah, who received into his house the Levite, and the woman his companion, is represented as coming from his work out of the field at even.—Judges xix. 16. The rich citizen of Bethlehem was with his reapers in the field when first he beheld Ruth, and bestowed favors upon her.—Ruth ii. 8. Saul is described as coming after the herd out of the field when he was informed of the dangers which threatened the people of Jabesh-Gilead.—1 Sam. xi. 5. The first monarch of the Israelites drove a yoke of oxen; nor was the humble employment considered beneath the dignity and rank of a king. When the successor of Saul was summoned before Samuel, to be anointed king over Israel, he was a keeper of sheep; and even when upon his throne, and had by his talents and bravery extended at once the power and the reputation of his countrymen among the neighboring

nations, the annual occupation of sheep-shearing called his sons and daughters into the hill country to take their share in the toils and amusements. In point of blood and ancestry, too, adds the writer from whom we abridge these remarks, every descendant of Jacob was held on the same footing; and the only ground of preëminence which one man could claim over another was connected with old age, wisdom, strength, or courage,—the qualities most respected in the original forms of civilized life.—Judges vi. 12. 2 Samuel xiii. 24.

The shepherds of Bethlehem were the first to hear the glad tidings, that the Messiah, the Saviour of the world, was born. They were the chosen ones to whom the joyous news was proclaimed; and it is interesting to know what class of men they were to whom the first annunciation of the Redeemer's birth was made by a vision of angels.

The ancient fields of Bethlehem, as before mentioned, are still used for the pasturage of sheep, whilst the shepherds, the same from age to age, still adhere to the primitive habits of the country.

The unchanging manners of the East exhibit now the same pictures of rural simplicity as were probably witnessed in the days of the patriarchs. Herds of goats with pendant ears, sheep with large tails, and asses which remind you by their beauty of the wild ass of Scripture, issue from the villages at dawn of day.* Arab women too, noticed by Dr. Clarke,

* The wild ass, or *pera*, celebrated in the book of Job, is to this day highly prized in Persia and the deserts of Tartary, as being fitter for the saddle than the finest breed of horses. It has nothing, says Shaw in his travels, of the dulness or stupidity of the common ass; and when properly trained, is docile and tractable in no common degree. It was this more valuable kind of ass that Saul was in search of when he was chosen by the prophet to discharge the duties of royalty. "Who has sent out the wild ass free? or who has loosed the band of the wild ass? whose house I have made the wilderness, and the barren land his dwellings. He scorneth the multitude of the city, neither regardeth he the crying of the driver. The range of the mountains is his pasture, and he searcheth after every green thing."—Job xxxix. 5, 6, 7, 8. The "wild goats of the rock," described in the same chapter, are larger than the tame goat. The horns, when fully grown, weigh from sixteen to eighteen pounds. The female, from her attachment to her young, is supposed

are seen bringing grapes to dry in the vineyards; others, with their faces veiled, carrying pitchers of water on their heads, like the daughters of Midian.

LETTER XIV.

Spot where the annunciation was vouchsafed to the shepherds,—Convent of St. John in the desert,—Cave where the Baptist dwelt, subsists without eating or drinking, clad in garments of camel's hair,—Illustrations from Scripture,—Commencement of St. John's ministry,—Derivation of the surname Baptist,—Tomb of the forerunner of our Lord,—Policy of the holy fathers,—Memorials kept sacred,—Food for him who was sent to prepare the way,—Raiment of camel's hair,—Dress of the modern dervishes,—Coats of shepherds and camel drivers,—Cloak of the Arab peasants,—Elijah "a hairy man,"—Rough garment of the prophet,—Sandys' simple narrative,—Ethiopian eunuch baptized by Philip,—Persons converted by Philip, miracles wrought by him,—Pools of Solomon,—Maundrell's description of the "sealed fountain,"—Traces of the ancient aqueduct, its firm construction, demolished by the Turks,—Garden of Solomon,—Illustration from Scripture.

OVER the spot where, as tradition says, the angels appeared to the shepherds, are the remains of the church, another monument of the pious zeal of the empress Helena;—but like most structures erected by her, and for similar purposes, the one in question was razed to the ground by the Turks;—the

to be alluded to in the book of Proverbs:—"Let thy wife be as the loving hind and the pleasant roe." Of the Syrian sheep, those of the long, broad tail are the most remarkable. It is ascertained that a common sheep of this sort, without the head, feet, skin, or entrails, will weigh from 60 to 80 lbs. of which the tail itself is 15 lbs., and upwards; but such as are of the largest breed, and have been fattened, will sometimes weigh 150 lbs., and the tail alone 50; a thing to some scarcely credible. Sheep of this description are commonly seen along the declivities of Lebanon, each burdened with the unwieldy appendage of a tail one fourth the weight of its body. This tail is of a substance between fat and marrow, and is used as a substitute for butter. To preserve the tails from being torn by the bushes, they fix a piece of thin board to the under part, where it is not covered with thick wool; and some, as Shaw mentions in his travels, have small wheels to facilitate the dragging of this board after them; whence, with a little extravagance, the story of having carts to carry their tails.

Grotto alone remains, said to be the spot where the annunciation was vouchsafed to the humble keepers of the flock.

It is usual with travellers on their way back to Jerusalem to leave the more direct route for the privilege of visiting the convent of St. John in the desert. The edifice was built by Helena and dedicated to the Baptist, and stands upon the spot where the forerunner of our Lord is supposed to have been born; the spot is marked with a star of marble with the inscription already mentioned. Here the cave is shown where John, the forerunner, lived from his early youth to the period of his abode in the wilderness.* Sequestered from the abodes of men, and clad in his simple habiliments, here dwelt the Baptist, subsisting on such wild nourishment as the unpeopled desert afforded. When Sandys visited the place he was shown, at the upper end of the cave, the rocky bench on which tradition says the forerunner of our Lord was accustomed to sleep. This portion of the cave is held doubly sacred, in the belief that he who impiously breaks a piece off stands forthwith excommunicated. In this manner, by the wise policy of the holy fathers, similar objects and spots are held sacred and remain unmutilated and entire. The pious pilgrim considers

* John was brought up from his infancy in the wilderness, where he abode without eating or drinking:—"For John came neither eating nor drinking; and they say he hath a devil."—Matt. xi. 18. This passage implies, according to the interpreters, eating and drinking little, and things of a plain kind, being clothed with camel's hair and a leathern girdle about his loins. "And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins: and his meat was locusts and wild honey."—Matt. iii. 4. At the age of thirty, in the fifteenth year of Tiberius, John began his ministry by proclaiming the approach of the Messiah, preaching repentance, and exhorting all to believe in him who was coming after him, and whose shoes' latchet he was not worthy to unloose. "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear; he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire."—Matt. iii. 2. Many persons confessed their sins and were baptized in the river Jordan. From this baptism the surname of Baptist was given to John. The evangelical writers do not mention where John was buried; but in the time of Julian the apostate, his tomb, it is said, was shown at Samaria, where the inhabitants opened it, and burnt part of the bones; the rest were saved by some Christians, who carried them to an abbot of Jerusalem named Philip.

it a sacrilege to touch with irreverent hands any memorial made venerable by tradition, or the abuse of which would incur the displeasure of the church.

As fruits and insects both served as food for the inhabitants of Palestine, it is a point unsettled which of the two was used by him who was sent to prepare the way. It was the opinion of the early Christians, that the Baptist lived on the produce of a particular tree which abounds in the desert. If we believe what the friars assert, says Maundrell, the very plants which yielded sustenance to the holy recluse continue to flourish in their ancient vigor; and the pilgrims, who dare not be wiser than such blind guides, gather the fruit of them, and carry it away with much devotion.

John the Baptist was habited in raiment of camel's hair; similar garments form the dress of the dervishes of the present day. The coarser cloth of this material is commonly worn by the poorer classes; it is used for manufacturing the coats of shepherds, and camel-drivers, and also for the covering of tents. It was doubtless this coarse kind which was adopted by John. By this, it is thought, he was distinguished from those residents in royal palaces who wore soft raiment. Elijah is said to have been a "hairy man;" but, in the opinion of a learned writer, it should be "a man dressed in hair," that is, camel's hair: A "rough garment," or garment of hairy manufacture, was characteristic of a prophet. "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the prophets shall be ashamed every one of his vision, when he hath prophesied; neither shall they wear a rough garment to deceive."—Zech. xiii. 4. A cloak of this coarse heavy material is usually worn by the Arab peasantry; those whom we employed as guides in crossing the Lebanon mountains were habited in this manner. This rough garment is worn beneath the sun's scorching rays, and apparently without the least inconvenience to the wearer. It is universally decorated with black and white stripes passing vertically down the back, which has but one

seam. The cloak is an entire square piece with holes for the arms.

The cave where the Baptist is said to have dwelt, is considered to be a portion of the solid rock, and measures twenty-four feet in length by twelve in breadth. On the south side, in the simple narrative of Sandys, "there gusheth a living spring, which entereth the rock, and again bursteth forth beneath the mouth of the cave,—a place that would make solitariness delightful, and stand in comparison with the turbulent pomp of cities." In another direction, south from the desert, the well is pointed out where Philip baptized the eunuch, whom he converted to Christianity.*

Travellers who combine in their researches a regard to the arts as well as to the religion of Judea, usually visit the pools of Solomon, which are supposed, as Maundrell suggests, to be connected with a scheme for supplying Jerusalem with water. By means of earthen pipes the streams issuing from these fountains were conveyed to the walls of the holy city, a distance of four miles. These reservoirs were minutely examined by Maundrell; on his testimony they yield an unfailing store of spring-water unlike any throughout the land of Judea.

The reservoirs are three in number, and contain a great depth of water. They are supplied from a fountain supposed to be the sealed one alluded to by Solomon in the book of Canticles:—"A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed."—Songs iv. 12. The springs all rise above the ground, and have no avenue to them but

* After the death of Stephen, the apostles being dispersed in various places, Philip went to preach at Samaria, where he performed several miracles and converted many persons. Some time after this he was by an angel commanded to travel on the road that leads from Jerusalem to Old Gaza in the way to Egypt. Philip obeyed, and met with an Ethiopian eunuch, a man of great authority, under Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, whom he converted and baptized.—Acts viii. 26. "And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing."—Acts viii. 39.

an opening like the mouth of a narrow well. A traveller, who descended through this opening to the depth of ten or twelve feet, found a vaulted room about fifteen paces long, and eight broad, adjoining which is another of the same form, but somewhat smaller.

The ancient aqueduct was so constructed as to prevent leakage, and cemented with such firmness that it has been known oftener to break than to separate. The traces now remaining are thought to denote an acquaintance with the principles of hydraulics which we could not have expected among the Hebrew architects. This strong aqueduct that withstood the lapse of ages was demolished at last by the hands of barbarians ; confirming the truth of the remark, that nothing can be so well wrought but the Turks are able to destroy it ; for of this strong aqueduct, which was carried formerly five or six leagues with such vast expense and labor, you see now only here and there a fragment remaining. About half a mile below the mountains where the pools of Solomon are situated, a deep valley is seen, embosomed in high hills, where, it is said, the gardens of that luxurious prince were laid out. The pleasure which he took in visiting his gardens, and the pools of water which he had constructed, is supposed to be alluded to in Ecclesiastes ii. 5, 6 :—" I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all kinds of fruits. I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees."

LETTER XV.

Bethlehem of Judea, extolled for its preëminence,—Illustration from Scripture,—Contrariety between Matthew and Micah,—Opinion concerning the prophecy of Micah,—Turkish impositions,—Bethlehemites, a bold, fierce race of men,—Insurrection at Bethlehem,—Inn where our Saviour was born,—Joseph and Mary, notion refuted concerning them,—Convent at Bethlehem, its appearance as a fortress,—Chapel of the Nativity,—Impressions on entering the tomb and birth-place of the Messiah,—Tekoa and Hebron,—Place of David's concealment, its immense dimensions,—Trumpet in Tekoa,—Illustration from Scripture,—Sepulchres of the patriarchs,—David's residence at Hebron, its population, mutinous character of the people, fit instruments for serving David against Saul,—Repast at the convent,—Wine of Lebanon, its reputation,—Illustration from Scripture,—Wine of Helbon,—Return to Jerusalem,—Incident on the route.

BETHLEHEM of Judea is so called in Scripture to distinguish it from another place of the same name in the tribe of Zebulun. The former is extolled for its preëminence by the prophet :—" But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall HE come forth unto me, that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from old, from everlasting."—Micah v. 2.*

* It is objected that there is a contrariety between Matthew and Micah, one of whom says,—“ And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a governor, that shall rule my people Israel.”—Matt. ii. 6. Micah says, that Bethlehem is small among the cities of Judah; Matthew, that it is not the least of the cities of Judah. In reply to this it has been remarked, that a city may be little, yet not the least, and that Matthew might read the text of Micah interrogatively,—“ And thou Bethlehem—art thou too small to be ranked among the cities of Judah?”—if so, he gives the true sense of the prophet, “Thou art not the least.” The Jews generally acknowledge that the Messiah should come out of Bethlehem; but they maintain that this prophecy of Micah has no regard either to Jesus or the Messiah. He of whom Micah speaks, they say, shall be “ruler in Israel;” and the remnant of his brethren shall be converted, and re-united with the children of Israel; whereas, our Lord, as a man, never reigned over Israel, and if he be God, he can have no brethren

From the crowds of Christian pilgrims who repair to the Grotto of the Nativity, and the number of travellers who visit the spot from curiosity or other motives, Bethlehem, like Jerusalem, has been made the theatre of Turkish impositions. Its situation, also, like that of the Holy City, has exposed it to the rage or cupidity of barbarian conquerors.

The Bethlehemites are a bold, fierce race of men, and unite in professions of Christianity. The necessity, as Volney says, of uniting for their common defence against the Bedouins, and the still more relentless agents of despotism, has in many instances prevailed over points of faith, and induced the monks to live on good terms with the Mahomedans. The resolute character of the Bethlehemites was manifested in the account given of a late insurrection among the inhabitants. The governor of Jerusalem had endeavored to impose fresh taxes upon the Bethlehemites, who had risen in consequence, and driven out the Mahometans. Fearing the determined character of the inhabitants, the governor, it appears, thought it advisable to overlook the insult offered to his troops, and relinquished his demand.

The inn in which our Saviour was born is thought to be a caravanserai where guests were received gratis. The supposition that such a place being full, and that Joseph and Mary were obliged to repose in a cave which usually served as a stable, is thought to be an outrage on common sense. The idea that the holy mother took refuge in any cave of this description is not founded on the authority of Scripture history. On the contrary, as suggested by Dr. Clarke, it was evidently a manger belonging to the inn, or khan; in other words, the upper rooms being occupied, the holy family were compelled

over whom to reign. But the answer to this is, that though Christ, as God, had no brethren, yet as the son of Mary, and as born of the Jewish nation, he had brethren. The prophet in this place carefully distinguishes his temporal birth at Bethlehem from "his goings forth," which, he says, "have been from of old, from everlasting."

to take up their abode in the court allotted to the mules and horses or other animals.

The convent erected over the birth-place of the Saviour is defended by thick walls of stone; the whole building presents the aspect of a fortress capable of withstanding the attacks of any common enemy. The cave over which the convent was built, and to which tradition points as the birth-place of the Saviour, is an excavation in the rock, and is paved with marble. To this cave, as already stated, the traveller descends by a flight of stone steps; he is led through the gloomy passage by priests with lighted torches. The Chapel of the Nativity occupies the site of the stable and the manger; it is illuminated with ever-burning lamps, the donation, so said, of different princes of Christendom. The chapel, which has floors and walls of marble, is computed to be thirty-seven feet six inches long, eleven feet three inches broad, and nine feet in height. Every object within these holy precincts is calculated to excite a feeling of devotion. Pictures, illustrating the mysteries peculiar to the place, adorn the walls of the chapel, —hymning voices respond to the solemn tones of the organ, while before the manger the “cradle of the Saviour,” the incense of worship is continually ascending.

We are struck with awe as we enter the confines of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem; the same feeling pervades the bosom of the Christian as he enters the birth-place of the Messiah at Bethlehem. At the tomb we behold where the body of Jesus was buried; the place from which he arose in triumph, having completed the work of man's redemption. At the place of the Nativity we look upon the sacred spot where Emmanuel first appeared in the form of humanity; where He was born whose star was seen in the East, who was foretold by the prophets, and whose coming should take away the sins of the world.

In the vicinity south of Bethlehem, various places of interest are pointed out:—among these may be mentioned Tekoa and Hebron. In this direction there is a grotto, which on one

occasion is said to have contained over thirty thousand men. This grotto is supposed to have been David's place of refuge when pursued by Saul. In this neighborhood is the mount where the sign of fire was set up, and the trumpet was blown in Tekoa. "O ye children of Benjamin, gather yourselves to flee out of the midst of Jerusalem, and blow the trumpet in Tekoa, and set up a sign of fire in Bethhaccerim; for evil appeareth out of the north, and great destruction."—Jer. vi. 1.

The whole of the country between Tekoa and Hebron is considered the finest and best cultivated of any found in the neighborhood of Jerusalem. Burckhardt, who visited Hebron in 1807, speaks of the sepulchres of the patriarchs being covered with rich carpets of green silk; magnificently embroidered with gold; those of their wives are covered with red, embroidered in the same way.

David fixed his residence at Hebron, and it was for some time the metropolis of his kingdom. It is noted in sacred history as containing the tombs of Sarah, Leah, and Rebekah; as the place also where Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were buried. A few disaffected Arabs now compose the population of the place. They are said to be mutinous, and rarely pay the duties without force; and make amends by their pillage for what is exacted from them. On the authority of a late French traveller, the Turks dare not dwell here, believing they could not live a week if they attempted it. The mutinous character of the people he considers but a continuation of their ancient disposition; which might render them fit instruments for serving David against Saul, and Absalom against David.

But we leave these interesting associations, which have already detained us too long in Bethlehem and its vicinities, and proceed on our journey back to Jerusalem, where we arrived just in time to escape exclusion, the gates being closed every night at sundown. Before leaving the convent at Bethlehem, we sat down to a feast consisting of sweet-meats, large clusters of fine grapes, and other fruits of the country, includ-

ing the mountain wine of delicate taste and flavor. De la Roque, in his journey across Lebanon, speaking of this wine, says,—It would be difficult to find anywhere, wine equal to that which was offered us; from which we determined that the reputation of the wine of Lebanon, alluded to by the prophet, was extremely well founded. “They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine: the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon.”—Hosea xiv. 7. These wines are of two sorts; the most common is the red; the most exquisite is of the color of Vin Muscat, and is called golden on account of its color. The reputation attached to this wine, and the character given it by travellers, have led to the belief that in this wine, Damascus traded with Tyre, and that Helbon, as mentioned by the prophet Ezekiel, was in the eastern part of Lebanon. “Damascus was thy merchant in the multitude of the wares of thy making; for the multitude of all riches; in the wine of Helbon, and white wool.”—Ezek. xxvii. 18.*

On our journey back to Jerusalem, we encountered something of an opposition on the part of a few Bedouin Arabs who had stationed themselves at given distances on the route. Travellers are sometimes annoyed in this part of the country by certain lawless clans, who chiefly live on plunder. One of our party in advance of the rest had the reins of his horse seized on by an ill-looking savage, who let go his hold at the sight of a pistol levelled at his head. Others, who had concealed themselves in a glen, were waiting the favorable opportunity of saluting us with a shower of stones as we passed. One of these missiles, sufficient to do its work, was hurled at us, and was probably interrupted in its aim, by the sudden appearance of a friend in the rear. We were fortunately

* Helbon, called in Europe Aleppo, is situated about one hundred and eighty miles north of Damascus, and about eighty inland from the coast of the Mediterranean sea. In 1822 it was visited by a dreadful earthquake by which it was almost entirely destroyed. From this place the ancient kings of Persia procured their wine for their own tables.

armed, else, as Byron somewhere says of himself, we might have adorned a tale instead of telling one. The authorities at Jerusalem threatened to punish the offenders. But what avails a threat, when a culprit can escape the penalty of the law?

LETTER XVI.

Channel of Gihon,—Solomon anointed king,—Illustrations from Scripture,—Entrance into the city,—Turkish bath,—Juggling farce of the holy fire,—Annual miracle of lighting the taper,—Blood of St. Januarius, object of devotion and astonishment among the Neapolitans,—Impositions as practised at the holy sepulchre, continue the same from year to year,—Friars of the nineteenth century, not less ignorant or honest than their predecessors in the days of the crusades,—Ceremonies on Good Friday night,—Crucified image of the Saviour,—Scene acted at the place of crucifixion,—Mummeries practised at the principal festivals chief obstacle to the propagation of Christianity among the tribes of the East,—Excitement of the mob at the first glimmering of the mysterious spark,—Descent of the holy fire, its manifest fraud, its pitiful ceremony as witnessed by Dr. Richardson,—Greek patriarch and Armenian bishop, chief actors in the scene,—Unruly transport of the people as the miracle draws near to its accomplishment,—Consecrated tapers,—Subjects worthy the contemplation of the reader.

ON our way back to Jerusalem we passed the upper channel of Gihon, whose waters were conveyed into Jerusalem by order of Hezekiah. "This same Hezekiah also stopped the upper water-course of Gihon, and brought it straight down to the west side of the city of David."—2 Chron. xxvii. 30.

At the fountain of Gihon, west of Jerusalem, Solomon was anointed king by the prophet Nathan, and Zadoc the high priest of the Jews:—"The king also said unto them, Take with you the servants of your lord, and cause Solomon my son to ride upon mine own mule, and bring him down to Gihon; and let Zadoc the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him there king over Israel; and blow ye with the trumpet and say, God save king Solomon."—1 Kings i. 33, 34.

Passing through the Turkish burial ground, and the olive plantations west of Jerusalem, we again cross the valley of Kedron, and reënter the city through the gate of St. Stephen. After the fatigues of a hot and toilsome journey we enjoyed the refreshing process of a Turkish bath; a luxury indeed, and known to those only who have experienced its revivifying effects.

In hot countries nothing more delectable can be imagined than such an ablution. It is the chief amusement of the East, and is practised by the Turk as a religious duty;—a wise provision of the prophet who made it so. The women who have their allotted apartments meet here to laugh away the hours and to enjoy the banquet of steam.

The bather enters an outer room, which is smoothly paved and furnished round with couches. In the centre of the area stands a spacious reservoir, shooting cool streams from numerous small pipes. Here, after bathing, you are supplied with coffee and pipes. But let us enter the interior, and show the process to be gone through before we are dismissed from the hands of the operator.

The bather is led to an adjoining apartment to prepare for the temperature of the next, which at first is an atmosphere of oppressive heat. A novice feels it difficult to breathe, until relieved by a shower of perspiration which soon starts through every pore. The operator now begins his work by applying a rough flesh-brush to the skin, which freshens and glows under the brisk operation. You submit yourself to the will of the man who has you in hand. You are turned, lifted, and pressed; your limbs are pulled, your joints are cracked. This shampooing process produces an agreeable sensation; it restores the fatigued body like a refreshing sleep. A copious shower-bath is now applied; and while you are dripping a turban is bound round the head and a garment is flung over the shoulders. You are led back to the outer apartment, where a couch or crib is prepared, and coffee and pipes are brought if desired. You feel like one sprung to

new life,—like a being of another element ; a slight covering is thrown over your limbs, and if you are a smoker, you may lose yourself awhile in the reveries engendered in the fumes of the narcotick weed.

Before leaving Jerusalem we invite the reader to accompany us once more to the church of the holy sepulchre and reflect upon the scenes witnessed there at the solemn season of Easter. On this occasion the “ juggling farce” of the holy fire is enacted, at which time it would be difficult to say whether madness, ignorance or superstition most prevail. One grand ceremony is the performance of the annual miracle of lighting the taper from the heaven-descended flame. In effecting this miracle a longer or shorter time is employed as occasion suits ; like that of the liquefaction of the blood of Saint Januarius at Naples, which Addison pronounced the most bungling trick he ever saw.*

* In the chapel of St. Januarius, at Naples, is the statue of that saint represented in a sitting posture, and ready to bless the people. In a small tabernacle with silver doors are preserved the head and two vials of the saint's blood, said to have been collected by the Neapolitan lady, during his martyrdom. This blood becomes miraculously liquid whenever it is placed before the head of Saint Januarius. The ceremony of this miracle is repeated three times a year ; that is, during eight days of the month of May, eight days of the month of September, and the day of protection, the 16th of December. This miracle is to the Neapolitans a constant object of devotion and astonishment, of which, no one who has not been present, can form a just idea. When liquefaction of the blood takes place, immediately the joy of the people knows no bounds ; but if the operations of the miracle are retarded one moment, the cries and groanings of the people rend the air ; for at Naples the procrastination of this miracle is considered the presage of some great misfortune ; but the devotion and faith of the Neapolitans, particularly of the women, are so great, that the blood never fails to become liquid, and resumes its consistency on each of the eight days ; so that every one may see and kiss the blood of St. Januarius, in as liquid a state as when it first issued from his veins. The city of Naples has several times been in danger of being destroyed by the eruptions of Mount Vesuvius, by earthquakes, and other calamities. But it has always been delivered from them by its patron saint. The hermitage, situated on the route up Vesuvius, contains a small chapel dedicated to the saint, who is annually implored to shield the building from the fury of the volcano.

A century and a half has elapsed since Maundrell witnessed the annual service as performed by the monks of Jerusalem at Easter Eve. The same impositions as practised in his time at the holy sepulchre are continued, at the present day, in all their folly and extravagance. One hundred and fifty years have passed without any visible improvement, and the friars of the nineteenth century may be as wise and as honest, perhaps, as were their predecessors in the days of the Crusaders. The Greek and Armenian priests, as Maundrell says, have acted the cheat so long already, they are forced now to stand to it for fear of endangering the apostasy of their people.

The solemn exercises commence on Good Friday night, at which time the holy brotherhood and the pilgrims convene in the Chapel of Apparition for the purpose of joining in a body to move round the church. Before the worshippers set out, they listen to a discourse which is delivered to them in total darkness. At the close of this ceremony each one has a lighted taper put into his hand, and prepares to join the procession. Among the crucifixes usually carried on this occasion Maundrell speaks of one of a very large size, which bore upon it the image of our Lord nailed to the cross and besmeared with blood. After visiting the different chapels they proceeded to Calvary, where they set up the crucified image. Here they acted the mimic scene of our Lord's crucifixion, the details of which would neither edify nor enlighten the mind of the reader.

The foolish exhibitions which disgrace the return of the principal festivals of the Holy Land are thought to be the chief obstacles to the propagation of Christianity among the Syrian tribes, and more especially among the Turks and the Jews, who do not permit any image or representation of created things even in the uses of ordinary life. The palpable fraud practised at Easter Eve in the miracle of the holy flame, may work upon the credulity of those who are taught to believe

that fire descends from heaven into the holy sepulchre to kindle their lamps and torches. .

In the management of the holy fire the miracle-mongers do not long remain in the sepulchre before some glimmering of the mysterious spark is seen, at the appearance of which the mob express unbounded delight. What would be the impression of the credulous multitude were the veil withdrawn, and were they allowed to behold the actors behind the scenes ! When Dr. Richardson witnessed this pitiful ceremony he occupied a station in the church from which he distinctly saw the flame issuing from a burning substance placed within the tomb, and which was raised and lowered according to circumstances. The Dr. thought the whole exhibition a bungling performance. The Greek patriarch and the Armenian bishop seem to be the chief actors in the scene. The door of the sepulchre is first entered by these holy functionaries, the lights within having been previously extinguished.

As the miracle draws nearer to its accomplishment crowds rush to the entrance of the tomb, each striving to be first to light his taper at the holy flame, it being considered as coming directly from heaven. The unruly transport of the people on this occasion has been compared to the noises of Babel. In the mean time the church resounds to the Turkish lash laid on in vain to repel the excesses of the mob who style themselves Christians. The strife to obtain a part of the first flame as it comes from the sepulchre, arises from the belief that it is the purest, and directly from above. The tapers first lighted with this celestial fire are consecrated and carefully preserved, to be sewed up in the grave-clothes, in the belief that one thus shrouded obtains a passport to the kingdom of the blessed.

But we leave the delusions and degrading exhibitions of monkish superstition for subjects more worthy the contemplation of the reader, and invite him to accompany a party on a short excursion through several of the most interesting portions of ancient Judea. The spots visited, and the persons who composed the travelling party, are referred to in the next Letter.

LETTER XVII.

Gen. Cass, family and suite,—Commodore Elliott,—Communication addressed to Gen. Jackson,—Instructions from the Secretary of the Navy to receive the American minister and suite on board the *Constitution*,—Embarkation at Marseilles,—Arrival at Jerusalem,—Bethany,—Illustrations from Scripture,—House of Lazarus,—Fountain of the Apostles,—River Jordan,—Arab guide,—Encampment,—City of Nain,—Illustration from Scripture,—Arrival at Napolose,—Woman of Samaria,—Jacob's Well,—Sources of reflection and interest contained in the fourth chapter of John,—Internal evidences of the truth of that chapter,—Its importance as a theological document, its historical and geographical accuracy,—View of Napolose from the surrounding country, flourishing condition of the city,—Ancient sepulchres, everlasting as the rocks wherein they are hewn,—Tomb of Joseph,—Scenes calculated to awaken local enthusiasm,—Fields of Sichem,—Illustration from Scripture,—Shepherds of Samaria, their patriarchal appearance,—Arrival at Nazareth,—Precipice where Jesus was about to be cast down,—Illustration from Scripture,—Joseph and Mary.

THE year following the period referred to in our last letter, a party from the ship, consisting of Gen. Cass, family and suite, made an excursion to Jerusalem and various places in the neighborhood of the ancient capital.* They were accompanied by the commander of the American squadron, who kept notes of his tour. These notes have been published with

* On the return to his winter quarters at Mahon, Com. Elliott addressed a communication to Gen. Jackson, stating to him the wishes of the Grecian powers to establish a treaty with the government of the United States, and that if the President would send him a travelling companion,—either Mr. Poinsett of South Carolina, or Col. Drayton, he could secure and establish such a treaty without the heavy expense of a regular mission. Gen. Cass, it seems, having accepted the mission to France, volunteered for the performance of the duties expressed in the Commodore's letter; securing at the same time from the Secretary of the Navy instructions for him to receive the general and his suite on board his ship.—The papers were enclosed to Com. Elliott by Gen. Cass, asking at the same time permission to add his wife, his three daughters, his son, and a male and female attendant, to which the Commodore answered that they would be as welcome as the flowers of May. Accordingly, on the first of May, 1837, Gen. Cass embarked on board the *Constitution*, at Marseilles, with his wife, his daughters, his son, three attachés, a male and

other matter remotely connected with the incidents of his travel. We shall avail ourselves of that portion of his journal which we think may be interesting to the reader, together with other information in relation to the spots visited and not contained in the journal. We travelled in company with the Commodore in various excursions along the shores of the Mediterranean; he had opportunities of visiting many of the most interesting portions of the old world;—the position he held as Commander of the American forces in the Mediterranean, gave him access to the society of kings, and was a passport to all places.

From the Mount of Olives the party proceeded to Bethany, a village about two miles east of Jerusalem, and noted in Scripture as the place where Martha and Mary dwelt with their brother Lazarus, whom Jesus raised from the dead; and where Mary anointed the feet of our Lord. "Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, there came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head as he sat at meat." —Matt. xxvi. 6, 7.

The ruins of the house are shown where Lazarus and his sisters dwelt; and the Fountain of the Apostles, so called, from the tradition that they were accustomed to refresh themselves at that place. Thence, passing through Jericho, they proceeded to the Dead Sea; thence to a point on the Jordan, five miles above. For the purpose of having the gate open at Jerusalem in the night, the Commodore left the party, for the city, taking with him an Arab guide. Having gone about four miles the guide halted and positively refused going any further. It was in vain to expostulate with him by signs to go on; the only return he made was motioning towards the hills and drawing his hand across his throat; which meant

female servant, and a French schoolmaster for himself, all of whom were received and accommodated, as before stated, until near the 25th of November of the same year, when the Commodore placed them on board the frigate *United States*, for Marseilles.

that the wild Arabs would murder one of the party, and the survivor (the guide) would lose his head on his return to the city. Accordingly they were compelled to encamp that night short of Jerusalem, entering the next morning. After visiting the tombs of the prophets, they proceeded to the city of Nain, where Jesus restored the widow's son to life as they were carrying him out to be buried.—“Now when he came nigh the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her. And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, arise. And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother.”—Luke vii. 12, &c.

The party now entered Napolose, the ancient Shechem of Scripture; here they tarried a night at Jacob's well, a spot held in great veneration, and visited by pilgrims of all ages as the place where our Saviour revealed himself to the woman of Samaria. “Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being weary with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour. There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink.”—John iv. 5, 6, 7.

In reference to the many sources of reflection and interest contained in the fourth chapter of John, it has been remarked, that no Christian scholar ever attentively read that chapter without being struck with the numerous internal evidences of truth which crowd upon the mind in its perusal. Within so small a compass it is impossible to find in other writings so many sources of reflection and interest. Independently of its importance as a theological document, it concentrates so much information that, in the opinion of a learned writer, a volume might be filled with the illustrations it reflects on the history of the Jews, and on the geography of their country. All that

can be gathered on those subjects, from Josephus, seems but as a comment to illustrate this chapter. The journey of our Lord from Judea into Galilee; the cause of it; his passage through the territory of Samaria; his approach to the metropolis of this country; its name; his arrival at the Amorite field which terminates the narrow valley of Sichem; the ancient custom of halting at a well; the female employment of drawing water; the disciples sent into the city for food, by which its situation out of the town is obviously implied; the question of the woman referring to existing prejudices which separated the Jews from the Samaritans; the depth of the well; the oriental allusion contained in the expression, "*living water*;" the history of the well, and the customs thereby illustrated; the worship upon Mount Gerizim; all these occur within the space of twenty verses; and if to these be added what has already been referred to in the remainder of the same chapter, we shall perhaps consider it as a record, which, in the words of him who sent it, We may lift up our eyes and look upon, for it is white already to harvest.*

The view of Napolose, as beheld from the heights of the surrounding country, has been long celebrated. The rich gardens and fragrant bowers seen in distance remind the traveller of the happy valley in Johnson's *Rasselas*.

The ancient Shechem is considered one of the most flourishing towns in all Judea, abounding in provisions and all the necessary articles of life. When Dr. Clarke entered the place he saw white bread exposed in the streets, of a quality superior to any that is found elsewhere throughout the Levant. He was received and regaled by the governor with all the magnificence of an Eastern sovereign. Refreshments of every kind were produced, and when it was supposed the list was exhausted, a sumptuous dinner was brought in. Nothing seemed to gratify the host more than that his guests should eat heartily; and to do him justice, adds the Dr., every indi-

* Clarke's Travels.

vidual of the party ought to have possessed the appetite of ten hungry pilgrims to satisfy his wishes in this respect.

The ancient sepulchres of Shechem, "as everlasting as the rocks wherein they are hewn," have attracted the attention of travellers. Maundrell noticed the tomb of Joseph, whose bones, according to tradition, were brought out of Egypt by the children of Israel and buried in Shechem. The Moslems have built a small temple over the tomb,—its authenticity is maintained on the authority of Scripture,—the remembrance of its situation has been preserved, from the veneration paid to it by Jews, by Christians and by Mahometans. At this place are shown other ancient sepulchres, all hewn in the solid rock. Clarke compares these tombs with those of Telmessus in the gulf of Glaucus, calculated for duration equal to that of the hills wherein they have been excavated. If anything, he adds, connected with the memory of past ages be calculated to awaken local enthusiasm the land around this city is preëminently entitled to consideration. The sacred story of events transacted in the fields of Sichem, from our earliest years, is remembered with delight; but with the territory before our eyes where those events took place, and in the view of objects existing as they were described above three thousand years ago, the grateful impressions kindle into ecstasy. Along the valley we behold a company of Ishmaelites, coming from Gilead as in the days of Reuben and Judah, with their camels bearing spicery, and balm, and myrrh. "And they sat down to eat bread: and they lifted up their eyes and looked, and behold a company of Ishmaelites came from Gilead, with their camels, bearing spicery, and balm and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt."—Gen. xxxvii. 25. Upon the hills flocks and herds are seen feeding, as in the days of the patriarchs. In the simple garb of the shepherds of Samaria the traveller observes nothing repugnant to the notions he may entertain of the appearance presented by the sons of Jacob. These scenes are calculated to elevate the mind; and under emotions so called forth by every circumstance of powerful

coincidence, a single moment seems, as said by one upon the spot, to concentrate whole ages of existence.

From Napolose our travelling party proceeded to Samaria, visiting the church of St. John, and the hanging gardens mentioned by the Jewish historian. Thence, passing through the valley of Esdraëlon, by the foot of Mount Tabor, they arrived at Nazareth. The ancient city, according to St. Luke, was built upon a hill: it now stands at the foot of it, and is surrounded by mountains. Pilgrims are usually entertained here by the Christians of the Greek church. On a hill near the town the precipice is pointed out, said to be that where the inhabitants were about to cast down Jesus. "And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, and rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong. But he passing through the midst of them, went his way."—Luke iv. 28, 29, 30.

LETTER XVIII.

Dwelling-place of our Saviour, his preaching at Nazareth,—Illustration from Scripture,—House in which Christ disputed with the doctors,—Stone table,—House of Joseph and Mary,—Glad tidings announced to the Blessed Virgin,—Illustration from Scripture,—Supernatural rarities,—Shaft miraculously sustained in the air, its manifest fraud,—Bathing in the Dead Sea,—Sea of Sodom,—subject of interest to the reader,—Density of the lake, no security against the accident of drowning,—Slaves thrown into the lake,—Maundrell's experiment,—Crossing the Hellespont,—Copious incrustations,—Waters of the lake, its agency in processes of petrification, shell-snails along its shores,—Analysis of the waters of the Dead Sea,—Origin of the different names of the lake,—Fish found in the waters,—Fatal to vegetation,—Offensive to the taste,—Musca of the Arabs, its intolerable odor on attrition,—used in paving mosques and churches,—endued with antiseptic virtues,—Sulphurous vapor of the lake fatal to birds, now discredited,—Absurd fables,—Dreams propagated by visionary travellers,—Successful experiment of a German traveller,—Earlier narratives relating to the Dead Sea filled with the marvellous,—Apple of Sodom.

THE tradition concerning the dwelling-place of Jesus Christ existed at a very early period. The little town of

Nazareth, in the tribe of Zebulun, in lower Galilee, is remarkable as being the residence of Christ for the first thirty years of his life. According to Luke, after the Saviour had begun his mission, he occasionally preached at Nazareth in the synagogue. "And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath-day, and stood up for to read."—Luke iv. 16.

A church now stands over the house in which the Saviour is said to have preached. Near this are the ruins of an edifice where he disputed with the doctors. The credulous Galileans regard with great veneration a stone which they believe to have served as a table for Christ and his disciples.

Among the relics exhibited by the monks at Nazareth, are the remains of a house, said to be that where Mary and Joseph dwelt, and the ruins of a building in which Joseph had his workshop. Here tradition points to the place where the angel announced the joyful tidings to the Blessed Virgin, as recorded in the Gospel of St. Luke. "And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God, unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary."—Luke i. 26, 27. A church is erected over the cave supposed to be the place, where to Mary the glad tidings were announced from the lips of the angel.*

Before we resume the regular route, we return to that part of the narrative which speaks of bathing in the Dead Sea, the exploit of most travellers on reaching the shores of Sodom, or the Sea of the Plain, as it is called in Scripture. To those unacquainted with the nature and properties of this remark-

* Several supernatural rarities, as Dr. Clarke calls them, are exhibited for the benefit of those who visit this church. When the Dr. descended into the cave in which the sanctuary stands, he saw two stone pillars, one of which, separated from its base, is said to sustain its capital and a part of its shaft miraculously in the air: so clumsily is the whole contrived, that what is shown for the lower fragment of the same pillar resting upon the earth, is not of the same substance, but of another marble.

able lake, a brief account of the waters of the Dead Sea, abridged from different writers on the subject, will not be uninteresting. On this head we give the opinions of intelligent tourists who have visited the lake, not as enthusiasts, but as travellers seeking for information.

The marvellous properties usually assigned to the Dead Sea by the earliest travellers, have vanished upon a more rigid investigation. It is now known that bodies sink or float upon it, in proportion to their specific gravity; and that, although the water is so dense as to be favorable to swimmers, no security is found against the common accident of drowning. Vespasian, in order to ascertain the facts now mentioned, commanded a number of his slaves to be bound hand and foot and thrown into the deepest part of the lake; so far from sinking, they all maintained their place on the surface until it pleased the emperor to have them taken out. But this anecdote, although perfectly consistent with truth, does not justify all the inferences which have been drawn from it. Maundrell, being willing to make an experiment, went into it, and found that it bore up his body with uncommon force. The story that men wading into it were buoyed up to the top, as soon as they got as deep as the middle, was found upon trial not true.

We would have passed over in silence the fact, remarks Mr. Carne, that bodies are better buoyed up in this lake, than in the fresh water or in the ocean, did not travellers dwell upon the circumstance as something marvellous, and look upon the settling of the point, by their swimming upon its waters, as a feat equal to that of Byron's crossing the Hellespont.*

Those of our party who bathed here found their faces covered by a thin crust of salt; the stones which the water occasionally overflows are encrusted with the same substance

* The only thing that surprised me was, says Byron, that, as doubts had been entertained of the truth of Leander's story, no traveller had ever endeavored to ascertain its practicability.

The water is found to deposite its salts in copious incrustations, and to prove a ready agent in all processes of petrification. An article of apparel if dipped in the lake is found, when dried, to be covered with a thick coating of these minerals. Hence, we cannot be surprised that the lake Asphaltites does not present any variety of fish. A few shell-snails constitute the sole tenants of its dreary shores, unmixed either with the helix or the muscle.

From different experiments in the analyses of these waters the result has proved that they hold the following substances in solution :—muriate of lime, 3.920 ; muriate of magnesia, 10.246 ; muriate of soda, 10.360 ; sulphate of lime, 0.54. A glance at this analysis will show that it is denser than seawater, and hence, will bear up substances which there would sink. From the bitumen found in this water, it was called by the Latins, *Lacus Asphaltites*. It received the name of *Dead Sea*, by which it is now commonly known, from the tradition that no living creature could exist in its saline and sulphurous waters ; no fish can live in it, and those carried thither by the rapidity of the Jordan, instantly die on being immersed in its acrid waves. Maundrell, nevertheless, states that he found some shell-fish resembling oysters on the shore, and Pococke was informed that a monk had seen fish caught in the water ; these are assertions that require further corroboration. Some of the latest observers, however, referred to by Mr. Taylor, affirm that there are small fish in the lake peculiar to itself, and also, that a few inferior sort of vegetables may be seen in the water.

No plant can vegetate in the waters of the Dead Sea, the mud of which is black, thick, and fœtid. No vegetation thrives within the vicinity of the lake ; the earth surrounding it is deeply impregnated with saline qualities, too predominant to admit of vegetable life ; the very air is saturated with them. The waters, as Volney affirms, are clear and incorruptible, and extremely offensive and bitter to the taste ; it has been found to be so completely saturated with salt as to dissolve

no more when thrown into it. Great quantities of asphaltum appear floating on the surface of the lake ; sulphur is likewise found on its edges ; and a kind of stone, of a black color, called *musca* by the Arabs. This stone, on attrition, exhales an intolerable odor, and burns like bitumen. The traveller who mentions this fact, saw pieces of it two feet square, in the convent of St. John in the wilderness, carved in bas relief, and polished to a high degree. In the polishing its disagreeable odor is lost. It is commonly used in paving churches, mosques and places of public resort. It is manufactured into rosaries and bracelets by the inhabitants of Bethlehem, who consider it as endued with antiseptic virtues, and wear it as an antidote against disease.

Many absurd fables have been circulated respecting the Dead Sea. The dream propagated by visionary travellers, that the sulphurous vapor hovering over it was fatal to birds that approached within its influence, is now completely discredited. Flocks of swallows are seen skimming along the lake, imbibing from its surface the moisture necessary in the construction of their nests ; while the absence of all the species is easily explained by a glance at the naked hills and barren plains, which supply no vegetable food. The experiment made by a German traveller was decisive, and puts at rest the idle supposition that birds attempting to fly across the lake are struck with pestiferous fumes. The traveller referred to, carried two sparrows to the shore, and having deprived them of some of the wing feathers, after a short flight both fell in, or rather on, the sea ; but so far from expiring there, they got out in safety.

The earlier narratives relating to the Dead Sea are filled with the marvellous. The same spirit of exaggeration, it has been noticed, may be discovered among writers of modern date in their accounts of this "lake of death," as is it called by Chateaubriand, who, in describing what he heard there, speaks of a dismal sound proceeding from it like the stifled clamors of the people engulfed in its waters!—its shores

producing fruit beautiful to the eye, but containing nothing but ashes. The enthusiastic Frenchman thought this the true apple of Sodom, which flatters the sight while it mocks the appetite. Maundrell, who narrowly inspected the shores of the lake, discovered no such apple, nor did he see any tree growing there from which one might expect such fruit; its very being and its beauty he believed to be a fiction, kept up, as my Lord Bacon affirms other false notions are, because it serves for a good allusion, and helps the poet to a similitude.*

LETTER XIX.

Subterraneous communication between the Mediterranean and Dead Sea,—that notion relinquished,—Daily evaporation sufficient to carry off the waters discharged into the lake,—Amount of water daily thrown into the lake,—Size of the Dead Sea not yet ascertained,—its dimensions differently estimated,—Practicability of conveying a vessel from Jaffa to the inland sea, advantages resulting from such an expedition,—Ancients best acquainted with the nature and properties of Lake Asphaltites,—Sodom and Gomorrah,—Crater of an extinguished volcano,—Pillars and fragments of buildings discovered near the shores of the lake,—Potuoli, its hot baths, and relics of temples,—Valley of the Jordan, bounded by two ranges of mountains,—Sodom built upon a mine of bitumen,—Opinions concerning the destruction of the guilty cities, not compatible with Scripture,—Bitumen, an article of traffic among the Arabs,—Mines of fossil salt on the banks of the lake, asphaltum floating on its surface,—Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the signal effect of God's anger,—Illustrations from Scripture,—Ruin and desolation of the vale of Siddim, once a rich and fertile valley,—Lot's place of refuge, his escape to Zoar, forewarned by the two angels,—Lot's wife, questions concerning her fate, pointed at as a memento and warning.

THE Dead Sea is constantly receiving the waters of the Jordan without overflowing its banks; a fact which has led

* This apple is thought to be the production of a small plant called *Solanum melongela*, a species of nightshade, commonly found in the neighborhood of Jéricho. The apples are sometimes full of dust, owing to a certain insect which attacks the fruit, converting the whole of the inside into a kind of powder, leaving the rind wholly entire, and in possession of its beautiful color.

some to conjecture the possibility of a subterraneous communication between the Mediterranean and the lake. This opinion has long been relinquished; the daily evaporation is found to be sufficient to carry off all the waters discharged into the Dead Sea. The river Jordan alone, it is estimated, throws daily into this sea more than six million tons of water, besides the several considerable streams which are continually augmenting the waters of the lake.

No ancient or modern traveller has ever accurately measured the dimensions of the Dead Sea. Josephus computes it to be seventy-two miles long and eighteen in breadth. Pliny says, it is one hundred miles in length, and twenty-five wide in the broadest part. The calculation of Diodorus falls far short of this: he rates it at sixty-two long, and seven and a half broad. Pococke agrees with this calculation; Maundrell and Dr. Clarke, with the measurements of Josephus. It is somewhat remarkable that neither ancient nor modern travellers, as yet, have ascertained the correct dimensions of the Dead Sea. It is thought a matter of surprise that no pains have been taken to throw light on this interesting point, or even to learn whether the periodical rise and fall of the lake afford any means for determining the accuracy of the ancient historians and geographers. Some curious discoveries it is conjectured would certainly be made, were the Turks to give permission to carry a vessel, were it practicable, from Jaffa to this inland sea. Notwithstanding the enterprise of modern science, the ancients, it is asserted, were better acquainted with the properties, and even the dimensions of the Lake Asphaltites, than the most learned nations of Europe in our own times?*

* Two aged and respectable inhabitants of Jerusalem told Maundrell that they had once been able to see some parts of the ruins of Sodom; that they were near the shore, and the water so shallow at the time, that they, together with some Frenchmen, went into it and found several pillars and fragments of buildings. The ancient historians give a circumference of about seven miles to the ruins of Sodom.

Some conjecture the site of Sodom and Gomorrah to be the crater of an extinguished volcano; but Chateaubriand, who examined Vesuvius and the Solfatara, dissents from this opinion.* In these, and the exhausted volcanoes of Auvergne, he saw mountains excavated in the form of a tunnel, lava, and ashes, exhibiting incontestable proof of the agency of fire. On the contrary, as he affirms, the Salt Sea is a lake of great length, curved like a bow, placed between two ranges of mountains, which have no mutual coherence of form, nor similarity of composition. They do not meet at the two extremities of the lake; but while the one continues to bound the valley of Jordan, and to run northward as far as Tiberias, the other stretches away to the south till it loses itself in the sands of Yemen.

Some suppose Sodom to have been built upon a mine of bitumen; if this idea be adopted with respect to the engulfed

* The Solfatara, near Puteoli or Puzzuoli, was called by the ancients *Forum Vulcani*. In the time of Pliny and Strabo it was supposed to be a volcano not entirely extinguished. It is now called *la Solfatara* on account of the great quantity of sulphur which issues from it, and burns at different places, causing a considerable heat; several openings emit a warm smoke, impregnated with sulphur and sal ammoniac; from this circumstance it is generally supposed that the spot is undermined by a subterranean fire; a supposition strengthened by the sound produced, when a stone is thrown on the ground, from which it appears to be hollow underneath. On approaching the principal openings, a noise is heard like that of boiling water.

The Solfatara itself seems to have been a mountain, the summit of which has been carried away by the violent action of a volcano. Several writers have thought the place communicated with Mount Vesuvius, but there is certainly no necessity to suppose the existence of a canal 16 or 17 miles in length as a medium of connection, when nature can with equal facility make two separate volcanoes. A learned Neapolitan writer has endeavored to prove that the Solfatara is one of the mouths of the Infernal regions. The fables of the poets mention the Solfatara as the scene of battle between the giants and Hercules.

Puteoli is yet famous for its natural hot baths which were celebrated in the time of Nero. It has suffered much from earthquakes; but vast ruins yet remain, among which are the baths of Nero, and Cicerò's villa; also the temple of Jupiter Serapis, an interesting monument of antiquity, in the Asiatic style of architecture. We spent a day among the ruins of Puteoli. Here Paul stayed a week on his journey to Rome. Acts xxviii. 13, 14.

cities, physics, in the opinion of a philosophical writer, may be admitted to explain the catastrophe without offence to religion. The notion suggested by Malte Brun, before noticed, that lightning from heaven set fire to the bituminous substance abounding in the vale of Siddim, or that the destruction of that place was effected by earthquakes or volcanic eruptions, is incompatible with Scripture accounts of the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah.

The bitumen supplied by the Lake Asphaltites, is said to form no inconsiderable article of traffic to large numbers of Arabs, who frequent its shores. The Pasha of Damascus, purchases at a small price the fruit of their labors, and in return for it supplies them with food, clothing, and a few cheap ornaments. In ancient times, we are told, it found a ready market in Egypt, where it was used in large quantities for embalming the dead; it was employed also as a substitute for stone, and appeared in the walls of houses and temples.

Mines of fossil salt are said to exist in the south-west bank of the lake, from which specimens have been sent to Europe; some also exist in the declivities of the mountains, and have provided, from time immemorial, for the consumption of the Arabs, and the city of Jerusalem. On the south-west bank, also, are hot springs and deep gullies, mentioned by Dr. Pococke as dangerous to the traveller were not their position indicated by small pyramidal edifices on the sides.

Throughout Scripture the destruction poured upon Sodom and Gomorrah is portrayed as one of the most signal effects of the wrath of the Almighty. The prophets alluded to the ruin of the guilty cities, and intimate that these places shall be desert, dried up, and uninhabited. "As in the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the neighbor cities thereof, saith the Lord, no man shall abide there, neither shall a son of man dwell in it."—Jer. xlix. 18. "And that the whole land thereof is brimstone, and salt, and burning that it is not sown nor beareth, nor any grass groweth therein, like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, and Admah and Zeboim,

which the Lord overthrew in his anger, and in his wrath.”—Deut. xxix. 23. “I have overthrown some of you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and ye were as a firebrand plucked out of the burning.”—Amos iv. 11.

The vale of Siddim, where stood the five cities of the plain, was a rich and fertile valley, a continuation of the Jordan;—after the destruction of this region by fire from heaven, it was overflowed by the waters of the Jordan which formed the present Dead Sea, or lake of Sodom. Every reader of the Bible will recollect that Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim, were the four cities overwhelmed by the judgment of God; that the fifth, called Zoar, was preserved at the earnest intercession of Lot as a place of refuge for himself, and because it was a little city. “Behold now this city is near to flee unto, and it is a little one. Oh let me escape thither, (is it not a little one?) and my soul shall live. And he said unto him, See, I have accepted thee concerning this thing also, that I will not overthrow the city for the which thou hast spoken. Haste thee, escape thither; for I cannot do anything till thou be come thither: therefore the name of the city was called Zoar.”—Gen. xix. 20, 21, 22.

Lot was forewarned by two angels from heaven of the vengeance of God about to fall upon the Sodomites. They entered the city in the evening; on the morning following, two angels conducted Lot and his family out of their house, saying, “Save yourselves with all haste, look not behind you, get as fast as you are able to the mountain, lest you be involved in the calamity of the city.” They consented that Lot should retire to Zoar, the place of refuge, and spared it at his earnest solicitation; Lot’s wife, looking behind her, was destroyed.

Several questions are proposed concerning Lot’s wife being changed into a pillar of salt. Some are of opinion, that being surprised and suffocated with fire and smoke, she continued in the same place, as immovable as a rock of salt; others, that a column or monument of salt stone was erected

on her grave; others, that she was stifled in the flame, and became a monument of salt to all posterity; that is, a permanent and durable monument of her imprudence. Mr. Taylor, favors the common opinion that she was suddenly petrified, and changed into a statue of rock salt, which is as hard as the hardest rock. The Hebrews reckoned among salts, nitre and bitumen, so that the term salt here used, denotes the bituminous mass which overwhelmed this woman, fixed her to the place where it fell upon her, raised a mound over her, of a height proportionable to that of her figure, and was long afterwards pointed at by the inhabitants as a *memento* of her fate, and a warning against loitering, when divinely exhorted. "Remember Lot's wife."—Luke xvii. 32.

LETTER XX.

Plain of Esdraëlon, most fertile part of Canaan, chosen place of encampment from the earliest to the present period,—Attack and retreat of the Turkish army,—Pretended likeness of Christ,—Virgin Mary's kitchen,—Flight of the Holy House to Loretto,—Table of Christ,—Indulgence granted by the Pope,—Fountain of the Blessed Virgin,—Pleasing memorials of primitive times,—Illustration from Scripture,—Grain in the East reduced to meal by the hand-mill,—Primeval mills, their antiquity,—Employment of grinding with mills confined solely to females,—Grinding at a mill a degrading employment among the Orientals,—Illustrated in the menial service performed by Samson,—Servile office of grinding for others,—Illustration from Scripture,—Cana of Galilee,—First miracle of converting water into wine,—Ancient pots,—Relics and sacred vestments,—Sympathy,—Tiberias, occupied by a town of a remoter age, built by Herod in honor of Tiberias Cæsar, made the metropolis of Galilee, taken possession of by Josephus, famous for its hot baths,—First place of Christian worship,—House which Peter inhabited,—Miraculous draught of fishes.

On the route to Nazareth, our travelling party proceeded through the valley of Esdraëlon, by the foot of Mount Tabor, upon which tradition places the scene of our Saviour's transfiguration. The Plain of Esdraëlon is considered the most

fertile part of the land of Canaan, being one vast meadow covered with the richest pastures and fields of wheat. It being harvest season, parcels of this beautiful wheat were gathered on the spot, and brought home to the United States, for distribution among the farmers of New England, and to seed-growers south and west.

The plain of Esdraëlon, the more modern name for the valley of Jezreel, on the borders of Issachar, has become remarkable as having been the chosen place of encampment in every contest carried on here from the days of the ancient Assyrian kings, down to the invasion of Napoleon Bonaparte. Jews, Gentiles, Saracens, Egyptians, Persians, Druses, Turks, Arabs, and Crusaders,—warriors out of every nation, under heaven, says an animated writer, have pitched their tents upon the plain of Esdraëlon, and have beheld their various banners wet with the dew of Tabor and of Hermon.*

Among the remarkable relics exhibited in the chapel of the Holy Virgin, at Nazareth, is a portrait of a pretended likeness of the Saviour. In the grotto called the Virgin Mary's Kitchen, the friars point out the chimney and fire-place of the Holy Mother. None of the cinders, fire-irons, or culinary instruments have been preserved; these, as Dr. Richardson remarks, probably fled with the Santa Casa or Holy House, to Loretto. Our only astonishment is, adds the Dr., that the house should have taken flight and left the chimney and the kitchen behind. We would remark with the traveller just named, that when called upon to surrender our belief to the legends invented by men whose ignorance is the best apology we can urge for their superstition, a certain degree of disgust and indignation is perfectly justifiable.

* Kleber was attacked near one of the villages in the great plain of Esdraëlon, by an army of twenty-five thousand Turks. At the head of a few hundred men he fought until he had expended all his ammunition. Napoleon advanced to his support with six hundred soldiers. The Turks commenced a hurried retreat, having lost several thousands in killed and wounded.

To the pilgrim who visits the stone already referred to, called the Table of Christ, the Pope, it is said, grants an Indulgence of seven years, and as many Lents to all the faithful in Christ, visiting this sacred place, upon receiving, at least, one pater noster, and an ave, provided they be in a state of grace. This stone, as before stated, is the resort of pilgrims of all creeds; even the Arabs and Turks visit it, because, as Clarke suggests, they believe some virtue must reside in a slab, before which all comers are so eager to prostrate themselves.

The Fountain of the Blessed Virgin, near Nazareth, is venerated in the belief that this place was honored by the presence of Mary. The custom of repairing to springs, as in olden times, is still kept up in Eastern countries. It has been alluded to as a pleasing memorial of the primitive times, like that still common in all parts of Palestine, to see two women grinding at the mill, illustrating the prophetic observation of our Saviour, concerning the day of Jerusalem's destruction: "Two women shall be grinding at the mill, the one shall be taken, and the other left."—Matt. xxiv. 41.

How striking the contrast when we compare these "unaltered tokens" of simple life which prevailed in Palestine, at the period of our Saviour's ministry, with the pernicious mummery, as Mr. Carne calls it, which continues to disgrace the more artificial monuments of Christian antiquity.

It may be well here to note, that grain in the East is commonly reduced to meal by the hand-mill, which consists, as accurately described by Clarke, of a lower mill-stone, the upper side of which is concave, and an upper mill-stone, the lower surface of which is convex. The hole for receiving corn is in the centre of the upper mill-stone; and in the operation for grinding, the lower is fixed, and the upper made to move round upon it, with considerable velocity, by means of a handle. These mills are still in use in the East, and in some parts of Scotland. They are the primæval mills of the world; and they are still found in all corn countries, where

rude and ancient customs have not been liable to those changes introduced by refinement. The employment of grinding with these mills is confined solely to females.

Among the Orientals it was considered a degrading employment to grind at a mill. When Samson was shut up in prison, blind, and yet of great strength, his enemies, in manifestation of the disgrace which they would heap upon him, made him grind at the mill, as a base and contemptible slave.*

We follow the route of the travelling party, and join them at Cana of Galilee, about six miles north-east from Nazareth. The remains of a house are here exhibited, where our Saviour, at the marriage feast, performed the first miracle of converting water into wine. John ii. 9, 10. Here the priests show one of the original pots which tradition says was used at the wedding feast, which Christ honored with his presence. The pious pilgrim may here behold the relics and sacred vestments preserved in the chapel. When these relics are exhibited, the priest betrays great emotion; on one occa-

* In this usage, observes Mr. Taylor, we discover a degree of vindictive contempt, which, perhaps, was the ne plus ultra of contumely on the part of the Philistines. Grinding was women's work, therefore severely degrading; it was simple work, requiring no art; it was laborious work, in which the strength of Samson was of service; and thus, by drudging for them in this menial employment, he earned a mortifying livelihood for himself. In this view, in Mr. Taylor's opinion, Samson was worse used than Job supposes his wife might be. "Then let my wife grind unto another, and let others bow down upon her."—Job xxxi. 10. That is, let my wife be so degraded, that instead of having her corn ground for her, she shall perform that servile office herself, or for me, the lawful object of her affectionate care, but let her grind for another. Samson, the hero! employed on woman's work! A fit employment for Delilah's deluded lover! He ground too for others! for those in prison with himself! Samson, the hero, labors, as Isaiah predicts the virgin daughter of Babylon should labor:—"Come down, sit in the dust; sit on the ground; there is no chair for thee: take the mill-stones, and grind meal; nay more, whereas women who grind, usually sing while grinding, sit thou silent, and get into darkness; steal into some dark hole, and obtain a partial concealment of thy vexation and disgrace."—Chap. xlvii. 1. Did Samson thus sit on the ground? adds Mr. Taylor,—if he did, he resembled the once haughty, but now abject daughter of Babylon.

sion, as related by a recent traveller, when the poor priest exhibited these precious memorials, he wept over them with so much sincerity, and lamented the indignities to which the holy places were exposed, in terms so affecting, that all the pilgrims wept also. Such were the tears which formerly excited the sympathy and roused the valor of the crusaders. The sailors of the party caught the kindled zeal, and nothing more was necessary to incite in them a hostile disposition towards every Saracen they might afterwards encounter.*

From Cana our party proceeded to Tiberias, a city on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee, and situated close to the edge of the lake. This city is considered to be the only place on the Sea of Galilee which retains any marks of its ancient importance. It is understood to cover the ground formerly occupied by a town of a much remoter age, and of which some traces can still be distinguished on the beach, a little to the southward of the present walls. The city was built by Herod the tetrarch of Galilee, and named by him in honor of Tiberias Cæsar. Herod endowed it with great advantages; which, with its convenient situation, soon made it the metropolis of Galilee. When he was obliged to leave Rome, he retired hither with his uncle Herod; and the emperor Claudius afterwards bestowing it upon him, it had the name of Claudia Tiberias. Josephus took possession of it at the time of the wars with the Jews, and gave the bastinado to the officer who came to propose terms of peace to it from the Romans. Vespasian intended to put all the inhabitants to the sword; but Agrippa prevailed on him to be satisfied with beating down part of its walls. Tiberias was famous for its baths of hot waters, from which diseased people received great benefit.

No antiquities now remain in the place, except a very ancient church, of an oblong square form, to which you descend by steps. This is believed to be the first place of

* Clarke's Travels.

Christian worship erected in Tiberias ; in fact, it is thought by some to be the oldest building used for that purpose in all Palestine. But, adds the writer from whom we abridge these notes, it derives no small interest from the popular belief that it is the very house which Peter inhabited at the time of his being called from his boat, to follow the Messiah. Here too it was, say the dwellers in Tiberias, that he pushed off his boat into the lake when about to have his faith rewarded by the miraculous draught of fishes.

LETTER XXI.

Tiberias destroyed by an earthquake,—Sea of Galilee,—Illustrations from Scripture,—Our Saviour surnamed Galilean,—Julian, a bigoted idolater, a bitter enemy of the Christian faith,—his exclamation at the hour of death,—Christians in general, called Galileans,—Christ known by his followers as the humble Nazarene,—Joseph called a Nazarite among his brethren,—Nazarite as applied to Joseph, supposed to signify chief, or him that is honored,—Title of Nazir given by Moses to Joseph, signifying one that is honored, applied in this sense to the chief of the king's household in the court of Persia,—Nazarite classed under four distinct heads,—Illustrations from Scripture,—Foretold by the prophets that Christ should be called a Nazarene, illustrated from Matthew,—Type and prophecy referring to our Saviour,—Illustrations from Scripture,—Vow under the ancient law, abstaining from wine and all intoxicating liquors,—Ceremony at the door of the temple,—Perpetual Nazarites continued through life without drinking wine or cutting the hair,—Paul's fulfilment of his vow,—Illustration from Scripture,—Nazarenes considered a Jewish sect, bigoted to the Mosaic law,—Place where our Saviour dwelt during the three years of his public ministry,—Literal fulfilment of the sentence of destruction pronounced against the city of Capernaum,—Illustrations from Scripture,—Plain of Gennesareth, a heap of ruins,—Cities of Galilee brought down to the lowest pitch of oblivion,—Village of Bethesda converted by Herod into the dignity of a city, named Julias, in compliment to the daughter of Augustus, no traces left of its walls or palaces.

WE left our travelling party at Tiberias, now nearly in ruins from the effects of an earthquake. Returning through Tiberias, they passed along the west bank of the Sea of Galilee, recalling to mind the situation of the disciples when

tossed in a storm they saw Jesus, in the fourth watch of the night, walking to them upon the waves. "But the ship now was in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves; for the wind was contrary. And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear. But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid."—Matt. xiv. 24—27.

The Sea of Galilee, otherwise called the Sea of Tiberias, is viewed with veneration by Christians, from its having been much frequented by Christ and his disciples. Our Saviour was surnamed Galilean, because he was brought up at Nazareth, a city of this province. He was also represented as a Galilean when summoned before Pilate. It deserves notice that he was so addressed by his bitter adversary the dying Julian:—"Thou hast conquered, O Galilean!"*

The disciples of Christ, and Christians in general, were called Galileans after their Master, or because several of his apostles belonged to that province. "And they were all amazed, **and** marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans?"—Acts ii. 7.

From early childhood to the period when he began his mission, our Saviour resided at Nazareth; and he is known and acknowledged by his followers as the humble Nazarene. Mr. Taylor classes Nazarite, or Nazarene, under four distinct heads: First,—An inhabitant of Nazareth; or native of that city. Second,—A sect of Christians. Third,—A man under a vow to observe the rules of Nazariteship; whether for his

* Julian was pierced with an arrow, which entered his side; in the attempt to pull it out a torrent of blood followed; as it was gushing from his side he took a handful, and casting it up towards heaven, he exclaimed,—*Thou hast conquered, O Galilean!* Julian was a bigoted idolater, and a bitter enemy of the Christian faith. Different accounts are given of his last moments. Some relate that he threw up a handful of his blood towards the sun, exclaiming to that body,—the God worshipped by the Persians,—"*There, satisfy thyself with that!*"

whole life, as Samson and John the Baptist; or for a time, as those in Amos, or those mentioned in Numbers. "And the Nazarite shall shave the head of his separation at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation; and shall take the hair of the head of his separation, and put it in the fire which is under the sacrifice of the peace-offerings. And the priest shall take the sodden shoulder of the ram, and one unleavened cake out of the basket, and one unleavened wafer, and shall put them upon the hands of the Nazarite, after the hair of his separation is shaven. And the priest shall wave them for a wave-offering before the Lord; this is holy for the priest, with the wave breast and heave shoulder; and after that the Nazarites may drink wine."—Numb. vi. 18, 19, 20. "And I raised up your sons for prophets, and your young men for Nazarites. Is it not even thus, O ye children of Israel? saith the Lord. But ye gave the Nazarites wine to drink; and commanded the prophets, saying, prophesy not."—Amos ii. 12, 13. Under the fourth head, the Nazarite is classed as a man of distinction and dignity in the court of a prince.

Christ received the name of Nazarene not only because the place called Nazareth was considered as his country, but also, because the prophets had foretold that he should be called a Nazarene. "And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, He shall be called a Nazarene."—Matt. ii. 23. It is known, however, that no particular place in the prophets expressly affirms that the Messiah should be called a Nazarene. The name Nazarite, given to the patriarch Joseph, it is conjectured, had some typical or prophetic reference to Christ. The name applied to Joseph among his brethren, expresses a man of great dignity.* Matthew is supposed to

* Nazarite, in the sense here used, is supposed to signify a chief, or him that is honored. Joseph was chief in the household of Pharaoh, and Moses gives him the title of Nazir, one that is honored. In the court of Persia, the Nazir or Nezir, is superintendent-general of the king's household, the chief officer of the crown, the high-steward of his family, treasures, and revenues. In this sense Joseph was Nezir of the house of Pharaoh.

allude to the words of Isaiah. "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: and the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord; and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears; but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked."—Isa. xi. 1—4. By the common consent of the interpreters, the rod and branch mentioned by the prophet, are believed to denote the Messiah.

Following the learned commentary of Mr. Taylor, it will be observed that a Nazarite, under the ancient law, was a man or woman engaged by a vow to abstain from wine and all intoxicating liquors, to let the hair grow, not to enter any house polluted by having a dead corpse in it, nor to be present at any funeral. If by accident any one should have died in their presence, they recommenced the whole of their consecration and Nazariteship. This vow generally lasted eight days, sometimes a month, and sometimes during their whole lives. When the time of Nazariteship was expired, the priest brought the person to the door of the temple, who there offered to the Lord a he-lamb for a burnt-offering, a she-lamb for an expiatory sacrifice, and a ram for a peace-offering. They offered likewise loaves and cakes, with wine for libations. After all was sacrificed and offered, the priest, or some other person, shaved the head of the Nazarite at the door of the tabernacle, and burnt his hair on the fire of the altar. Then the priest put into his hands the shoulder of the ram roasted, with a loaf and a cake, which the Nazarite returning into the hands of the priest, he offered them to the Lord, lifting them up in the presence of the Nazarite. From this time the offerer might drink wine, his Nazariteship

being accomplished. Perpetual Nazarites, as Samson and John the Baptist, were consecrated to their Nazariteship by their parents, and continued all their lives in this state, without drinking wine, or cutting their hair. Those who made a vow of Nazariteship out of Palestine, and could not come to the temple when their vow was expired, contented themselves with observing the abstinence required by the law, and cutting off their hair in the place where they were. The offerings and sacrifices prescribed by Moses, to be offered at the temple, by themselves, or by others for them, they deferred till a convenient opportunity. Hence Paul, being at Corinth, having made the vow of a Nazarite, he had his hair cut off at Cenchrea, but deferred the complete fulfilment of his vow till he came to Jerusalem. "And Paul after this tarried there yet a good while, and then took leave of his brethren, and sailed thence into Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquilla; having shorn his head in Cenchrea: for he had a vow."—Acts xviii. 18.

The Nazarines are described as persons "who believed in Christ the Son of God, born of the Virgin Mary," in whom the orthodox believe; but who were nevertheless so bigoted to the Mosaic law, that they were rather to be considered as a Jewish sect than a Christian.

From this digression we follow the route of our party and proceed to Capernaum, a city on the western shores of the Sea of Galilee, and where our Saviour principally dwelt during the three years of his public ministry. "And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zebulon and Nephthalim."—Matt. iv. 13. Like ancient Tyre, the city has passed away, and the place on which it stood remains unknown. "And thou Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell; for if the mighty works which have been done in thee had been done in Sodom, it would have remained unto this day. But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than

for thee.”—Matt. xi. 23, 24. When Dr. Richardson passed through the plain of Gennesareth, he inquired of the natives whether they knew such a place as Capernaum? to which they replied, “Cavernahum wa Chonasi, they are quite near, but in ruins.”

In the neighborhood of the ancient plain are found the ruins of stately edifices, and fragments of sculptured marbles, indicating that the city of Capernaum, in the time of the Saviour, was a place of wealth and consequence. It is difficult to determine the situation once occupied by the principal towns along the shores of Galilee. Their history has been covered with a cloud which it is impossible now to penetrate. No traveller has, as yet, discovered the remains of the palaces erected in the city of Julias, so named in compliment to the daughter of Augustus.* The walls and foundations of the town of Gennesareth, have in a like manner disappeared; or, if there be any relics of the town which once gave its name to the inland sea whose shores it adorned, they are so indistinct and ambiguous as not to merit the notice of the traveller. The denunciation uttered against the unbelieving cities of Galilee, has been literally fulfilled, as they are now brought down to the lowest pitch of obscurity and oblivion.†

* Bethesda was converted by Herod from an insignificant village, into the dignity and grandeur of a city, named Julias, in compliment to the daughter of Augustus.

† Clarke's Travels.

LETTER XXII.

Arrival at Saphet, held in veneration by the Jews,—Tradition concerning the Messias,—Wells of water dug by the patriarch Isaac,—Illustrations from Scripture,—Four cities considered holy by the Jews,—Saphet supposed to be the city pointed out in the Sermon on the Mount,—Illustration from Scripture,—French troops garrisoned at Saphet,—Djezzar Pasha resolves to massacre all the believers in Moses and Jesus Christ, interposition of the British Admiral, remembered with gratitude by the inhabitants,—Palestine, the theatre of wars, insurrections, and massacres,—Napoleon in Egypt,—Invasion of Syria by the French army,—Siege of Acre,—Personal courage of the Pasha,—Motives which stimulated Napoleon to persevere in the sanguinary and protracted siege of Acre, his object in the conquest of Egypt and Syria,—Arrival at Damascus,—Hospitality of Shereef Pasha,—Table spread in European style, eating with fingers,—Performance of the Dervishes,—Sporting with the bites of venomous serpents,—Egyptian Arabs,—Exhibition at Cairo,—Tribe claiming power over poisonous reptiles.

FROM Capernaum the party proceeded to Jacob's bridge, on the Jordan, which they crossed coming to Saphet, a place held in religious veneration by the Hebrews. There is a university at Saphet, for the education of the Jewish rabbis, of whom, according to Burckhardt, there are usually twenty or thirty resident, collected from different countries of Europe, Asia, and Africa. Their attachment to the place is said to arise chiefly from the traditionary belief that the Messias is to reign here forty years before he assumes the government of Jerusalem. In the neighborhood the wells are pointed out supposed to be those which were dug by the patriarch Isaac, and became the cause of contention between his brethren and those of Gerar. Isaac grew very rich, and his flocks multiplying, the Philistines of Gerar were so envious that they filled up the wells which Isaac's servants had dug. "And Isaac departed thence, and pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there. And Isaac digged again the wells of water which they had digged in the days of Abraham his

father; for the Philistines had stopped them after the death of Abraham: and he called their names after the names by which his father had called them. And Isaac's servants digged in the valley, and found there a well of springing water. And the herdsmen of Gerar did strive with Isaac's herdsmen, saying, The water is ours, and he called the name of the well Esek; (*Contention*.) because they strove with him. And they digged another well, and strove for that also; and he called the name of it Sitnah; (*Hatred*.) And he removed from thence, and digged another well, and for that they strove not; and he called the name of it Rehoboth; (*Room*.) and he said, For now the Lord hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land."—Gen. xxvi. 17—22.

The Jews principally reside at Saphet, Hebron, Tiberias and Jerusalem, the four cities which they consider as holy. The first mentioned was destroyed by an earthquake in 1837, before which time over seven thousand Jews were resident there.

Saphet stands on an eminence in the vicinity of the Sea of Galilee, and is thought to be the city pointed out by our Saviour in the Sermon on the Mount. "A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid."—Matt. v. 14.

In the days of the Crusades, Saphet was a place of no small consequence; during the invasion of Syria by Napoleon, it was occupied by a detachment of French soldiers. Burckhardt, in noticing this place, refers to a well known circumstance which occurred at the time the French army retreated from before Acre.

The tyrant Djezzar Pasha, to avenge himself on the Franks, inflicted a severe punishment on the Jewish and Christian inhabitants of Saphet. It is said that he had resolved to massacre all the believers in Moses and Jesus Christ, who might be found in any part of his dominions, and had actually sent orders to Nazareth and Jerusalem, to accomplish his barbarous design. But Sir Sidney Smith, on being apprized of his intention, conveyed him the assurance, that,

if a single Christian should fall, he would bombard Acre, and set it on fire. The interposition of the British admiral is still remembered with heartfelt gratitude by all the inhabitants, who looked upon him as their deliverer.

Palestine, for the last three hundred years, has been made the theatre of wars, insurrections and massacres, the details of which would neither edify nor instruct the reader. In our day its affairs assumed a new importance, when, to meet the preparations against him, the general of the French army, at the head of ten thousand chosen men, resolved to cross the desert which divides Egypt from the borders of Judea.

The vicissitudes and disasters which followed the campaigns of Napoleon during his invasion of Syria and Egypt, are familiar to every reader. The fate which attended the attempt to reduce the towers of Acre, is still fresh in the recollections of many who were eye-witnesses of that long and sanguinary siege. Napoleon opened his trenches in the spring of 1799, in the firm conviction that the Turkish garrison could not long resist the fury of his onset, and the skill of his engineers. "On that little town," said he to one of his generals, as they were standing together on an eminence which still bears the name of Richard Cœur de Lion, "on that little town depends the fate of the East. Behold the key of Constantinople and of India!"

At the end of ten days a breach was effected; the assault, says the biographer of Napoleon, was conducted with so much firmness and spirit, that for a moment the garrison was overpowered, and the town seemed lost. The Pasha, renowned for his personal courage, threw himself into the thickest body of the combatants, and at length, by strength of hand and the most heroic example, rallied his troops and drove the enemy from the walls.

During the assault of the 8th of May, more than two hundred men penetrated into the city. Already the shout of victory was raised; but the breach, taken in flank by the Turks, could not be entered with sufficient promptitude, and the

party was left without support. The streets were barricaded ; the very women were running about, throwing dust into the air, and exciting the inhabitants by cries and howling ; all contributed to render unavailing this short occupation by a handful of men, who, finding themselves alone, regained the breach by a retrograde movement ; but not before many had fallen.

Bourrienne relates, that, on the 21st of May, after sixty days' ineffectual labor under a burning sun, Napoleon ordered a last assault on the obstinate garrison of Ptolemais, which had barred his path to the accomplishment of the most splendid conquests. This attempt was not less fruitless than those which had preceded it, and was attended with the loss of many brave warriors. A fleet was at hand to reinforce Djazzar with men and arms ; the French, on the contrary, were perishing under the plague, which had already found its way into their ranks, and were, besides, constantly threatened by swarms of Arabs and Mamlouks, who had assembled in the neighboring mountains.*

On arriving at Damascus, our party found that letters from

* The motives which spurred Napoleon to persevere, after repeated repulses, in the sanguinary and protracted siege of Acre, may be gathered from the document dictated by himself:—

"I see that this paltry town has cost me many men, and occupied much time ; but things have gone too far not to risk a last effort. If we succeed, it is to be hoped we shall find in that place the treasures of the Pasha, and arms for three hundred thousand men. I will raise and arm the whole of Syria, which is already greatly exasperated by the cruelty of Djazzar, for whose fall you have seen the people supplicate Heaven at every assault. I advance upon Damascus and Aleppo ; I recruit my army by marching into every country where discontent prevails ; I announce to the people the abolition of slavery, and of the tyrannical government of the pashas ; I arrive at Constantinople with armed masses ; I overturn the dominion of the Mussulmen ; I found in the East a new and mighty empire which shall fix my position with posterity ; and, perhaps I return to Paris by Adrianople or Vienna, having annihilated the house of Austria."

Napoleon imagined that by the conquest of Egypt and Syria, he should open for himself a path into the remoter provinces of the Asiatic continent, and perhaps establish his power on either bank of the Ganges.

[*Bourrienne.*]

Mahomet Ali to the Emir or Shereef,* had preceded them, with instructions to the latter to receive his guests with every kindness and attention; in obedience to which the Emir prepared them elegant quarters, and for their further gratification spread his table in European style, his children sitting down with the party. It was soon discovered, however, that this mode of eating was not at all congenial to their customs; for they not only made an awkward attempt at using the knife and fork, but actually threw them aside and laid hold with their fingers. We reserve another occasion to speak of Damascus and its environs, the beauty of which has been justly extolled by all travellers.

Previous to their departure an invitation was given to the party to repair to the palace of the Pasha and witness a performance of the Dervishes, a set of jugglers who enact many remarkable feats.

After some religious ceremony, they commenced by putting in their mouths live coals, intensely hot, and moving them about with motions of the tongue and head until completely extinguished. Their bodies were then pierced with sharp-pointed irons in various parts. An instrument with a large ball at the end, was passed through the skin of the neck, the blood oozing from the wound, and then plunged into the breast and abdomen. A sharp-edged cimeter, doubtless that of the Great High Executioner, was drawn roughly across the body; the blade almost buried in the flesh. The parts of the performances thus operated on were without clothing, and the only healing property applied to the wounds was spittle from the mouth of the priest. The cimeter of the Turk is a singular weapon, and peculiarly adapted for severing the head from the body, for which purpose it is so commonly used by the Turks. It is a blade similar to the broad-sword, but bent in such a position as to effect a severe cut by a straightforward motion of the arm, or thrust. From the

* Emir or Shereef, a Mahommedan noble claiming descent from the Prophet, and distinguished by a green turban,

heel the blade is almost straight to the centre, where it suddenly turns, forming an angle of about 45 degrees. Twelve Dervishes were now brought in, and placed upon the ground in a manner resembling the fingers on the hand, when an Arab horse, mounted by a huge Arab, passed over their bodies. This was no juggling, but good earnest, for the horses' hoofs were fairly planted in the bodies of the Dervishes. These jugglers are equally expert at all feats of bodily exercise and tricks of legerdemain; and the art also of sporting with the bites of venomous serpents, to the great astonishment of the populace.* Clarke speaks of encountering a concourse of people at Cairo, following men apparently frantic, who, with every appearance of convulsive agony, were brandishing live serpents, and then tearing them with their teeth; snatching them from each other's mouths with loud cries and distorted features, and afterwards falling into the arms of the spectators, as if swooning; the women all the while rending the air with their lamentations. There is only one tribe that claims this singular power over an animal so dangerous. Tradition says they are protected by the Prophet from any injury that might befall them, on account of some signal act of piety performed by their ancestors. These persons, however, do not always escape:—the book of Ecclesiasticus, asks, "Who will pity a charmer that is bitten by a serpent?"†

* The custom of taming serpents, of sporting with the bites of the most poisonous vipers, and even of eating these animals alive, may be traced to the remotest times: it is alluded to by Herodotus, and distinctly mentioned by Pliny.

† Ancient and Modern Egypt.

LETTER XXIII.

Governor of Jerusalem, displaced for his kindness to Christians, his attention to Prince de Joinville,—A present, the highest favor shown a Turk,—Acceptance of the cimeter, conditions on which it was received,—Article relating to the subject of presents from foreign princes,—Pope's medal,—Punctilio of the Turk,—Turkish cimeter, sometimes a splendid affair,—Presents,—Baälbec,—Wonder of Syria,—Roman Eagle,—Arabian cavalry,—Cedars of Lebanon,—Prince of Lebanon mountains,—Arrival on board the ship,—Island of Cyprus,—Return to Jaffa,—Cæsarea Palestina, the ancient Judean capital, now a trackless desert,—Fragments of pillars and mosaic pavements,—Ruins of Cæsarea, a quarry for the erection of edifices,—Mole erected by Herod,—Saint Paul's prison,—his summons before the Roman governor, his eloquent appeal,—Paul's firmness and intrepidity,—Agrippa smote by the angel,—Illustrations from Scripture,—The prophet Agabus,—Temple erected to Cæsar, the city dedicated to him,—Splendor of the ceremony of dedication,—Cæsarea in contrast to its former magnificence.

At Damascus our party received every civility from the British consul, at whose table they met the former governor of Jerusalem, who, from his kindness to Christians generally, was displaced by Mahomet Ali. This governor had shown marked attention to the Prince de Joinville, which the prince mentioned to his father, the king of France, who, accustomed to present mementos to those who kindly treated his son, sent one to the governor of Jerusalem. It will be recollected that the highest favor which can be shown a Turk, is to make him a present, be it large or small; to decline the compliment places an insuperable barrier to all further intercourse. The governor, however, having been removed, did not receive the present designed for him; it passed into the hands of his successor in office, who still enjoys it.*

* While at Rome, Commodore Elliott received from the Pope a beautiful medal, the upper side representing the face of his Holiness, the reverse the keys of Saint Peter, and other catholic emblems. The compliment was made through the hands of Prince Musignani, and accepted conditionally, reserving

Commodore Elliott narrowly escaped a fate similar to that of the governor of Jerusalem. The day after the visit of Mahomet Ali, on board the *Constitution*, the minister of the viceroy called on the American consul at Alexandria, and asked, through him, the Commodore's acceptance of a cimeter from the Pasha of Egypt. The present could not be received as a personal compliment; but wishing to obtain a burial for our dead at Jerusalem, as also a participation in the trade of Syria, which England, France, Russia, and Austria secured only after tedious negotiation, the Commodore agreed to accept the cimeter for transmission to our government. On these conditions it was received, sent home, and placed in the Navy Department at Washington.

It is hardly necessary to inform the reader that no ambassador, foreign minister, or officer, in the employ of the United States, while abroad, is permitted to receive any present whatever from any "foreign prince, power, or potentate."

The marked attentions shown the Pasha of Egypt, while on board the *Constitution*, were not forgotten by that dignitary, as manifested in the present already mentioned. The Turk is punctilious in these matters. With regard to presents, as Byron says, you will rarely find yourself a loser; as one worth acceptance is generally returned by another of similar value, a horse, or a shawl. The Turkish cimeter is sometimes a splendid affair; the one for example which contains a text from the Koran, in letters of gold. Amongst those in my possession, says Byron, is one with a blade of singular construction; it is very broad, and the edge notched into serpentine curves like the ripple of water, or the wavering of flame. I asked the Armenian who sold it, what possible use such a figure could add; he said, in Italian, he did not know; but the Mussulmen had an idea that those of this form give

it to be deposited with the Department at Washington. The medal was subsequently placed in the hands of Gen. Cass, for deposit in the State Department.

a severer wound; and liked it because it was "piu feroce." We saw many of this description in the bazaars at Damascus. In the *Bride of Abydos*, the poet refers to the cimeter containing the text from the Koran:—

"So may the Koran verse displayed
Upon its steel, direct my blade."

After remaining a week at Damascus, the party proceeded to Baälbec, passing through the country lying beneath the lofty ridges of Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon. In the course of these Letters, the reader will accompany us to the walls of the great temple at Baälbec, the "wonder of Syria," and referred to by the people of the country as the work of superhuman hands. The party arrived at Baälbec about meridian. A tolerable idea may be had of the magnitude of the ruins of the ancient temple, from a trifling incident related by one of the parties. He had been informed, without knowing its size, that there was a splendid Roman Eagle among the ruins, and he asked permission to take with him to the sea-coast this emblem of his own country; to which Ibrahim Pasha, who was then encamped at Baälbec, gave his consent. "Visiting the temple for the inspection of it," says the narrator, "judge of my surprise on finding it elevated at the entrance of the archway, and weighing, at least, one ton." The eagle is carved in splendid relief, grasping a caduceus in his talons, and surrounded by a wreath, the two ends of which he holds in his beak.

Crossing the mountains, descending on the west side, our travellers came to the celebrated cedars of Lebanon. To a branch of the largest, one hung his hammock, at the risk of a little cold, and slept there all night. Early next morning the peasants began to collect round; among them a priest from the village of Eden. He opened the door of his church, which was hewn out of the body of the largest cedar, then invited the strangers to join in his religious devotion, having a two-fold object in view, to pray and solicit alms. About

twenty-five of the cedars are yet standing; the largest measures nearly fifty-nine feet in circumference. Arriving at the town of Eden, the party were met by one of the princes of Lebanon mountains, who entertained them with every hospitality. The following morning they continued their route, and at night the whole company embarked on board the *Constitution*, then at anchor in the gulf of Tripoli.

From Tripoli we proceeded to the Island of Cyprus, touching at Lanarca and Limasol, displaying the first American flag on a man-of-war in that port. We shall have occasion to speak of Cyprus again in our progress along the shores of the Mediterranean; at present, the reader will follow us on our route across the mountains of Lebanon, taking our departure from Jerusalem, and arriving after a toilsome journey at Jaffa, where we were hospitably entertained by the American consul at that place.

A pleasant breeze soon carried us to Cæsarea Palestina, the ancient Judean capital, and once the most flourishing city of Syria. It is now a trackless desert, without habitation, or sign of human inhabitant. Wolves and jackals haunt its solitude; bats flit amidst shapeless ruins, and the green lizard crosses the traveller in his path.

Huge blocks of granite, fragments of pillars and mosaic pavements lay buried in the sands. About a mile in the interior we discovered the entire capital of a marble column of exquisite sculpture, which we bore off with us.* Similar fragments were gathered in the same direction, some above ground, others half buried in the earth.

The ruins of Cæsarea have long served as a quarry for the erection of edifices. The beautiful columns which adorn the palace at Acre, besides the ornaments of the mosque, fountain and bath, were brought, we are told, from Cæsarea Palestina. Vestiges of the enormous mole, constructed by order of Herod, may yet be traced; remains also of the cell, supposed to be

* Now in a public institution at Philadelphia.

that where Paul was confined during his imprisonment at Cæsarea: two years he was detained a prisoner at this place, till he could be conveniently sent to Rome for having appealed to Cæsar. "For if I be an offender, and have committed anything worthy of death, I refuse not to die; but if there be none of these things whereof these accuse me, no man may deliver me unto them. I appeal unto Cæsar."—Acts xxv. 11.

As we wandered along the desert shores of Cæsarea, the important scenes which were witnessed here, passed in shadowy array before us. In imagination we recalled the image of Paul, when, summoned before the Roman governor, in the demonstration of the spirit and the power, the mighty advocate stood forth and reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come. As the eloquent apostle enlarged on these things, Felix trembled, cut short his discourse, and referred him to a more convenient season. As he related to Agrippa the manner of his conversion, and spoke to him of Jesus Christ, of his character, and his resurrection, Festus said with a loud voice, "Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad." "I am not mad, most noble Festus," replied the apostle, "but speak the words of truth and soberness." Such was the power with which he appealed to the conscience of the king, that he at length exclaimed, "Almost thou persuadest me to become a Christian!" "I would to God," said Paul, "that you and all were, not only almost, but altogether, such as I am; except these bonds."

Not all the oratory of Tertullus, says an eloquent writer, nor the clamor of his numerous adversaries, nor even the countenance of the most profligate of tyrants, availed against the firmness and intrepidity of the oracle of God. The judge had trembled before his prisoner; and now a second occasion offered, in which, for the admiration and triumph of the Christian world, one of its bitterest persecutors, and a Jew, appeals, in the public tribunal of a large and populous city, to all its chiefs and its rulers, its governor and

its king, for the truth of his conversion, founded on the highest evidence, delivered in the most fair, open, and illustrious manner.

Frequent mention is made of Cæsarea in the New Testament. Here the angel of God smote Herod Agrippa so that he perished.* "And upon a set day, Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne, and made an oration unto them. And the people gave a shout, saying, It is the voice of a god, and not of a man. And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory; and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost."—Acts xii. 21, 22, 23.

It was at Cæsarea the prophet Agabus foretold to Paul that he would be bound at Jerusalem. "And as we tarried there many days, there came down from Judea a certain prophet named Agabus. And when he was come unto us, he took Paul's girdle, and bound his own hands and feet, and said, Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem, bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles."—Acts xxi. 10, 11.

We saw no traces of the famous temple erected to Cæsar, to whom the city was dedicated, and whose name it perpetuates. The theatre, amphitheatre and forum, mentioned by Josephus, have entirely disappeared. The splendor and profusion attending the dedication of the city, were carried by Herod to every excess. To render the occasion illustrious, he procured musicians from remote countries, including gladiators

* At Cæsarea, Agrippa celebrated games in honor of Claudius. Here the inhabitants of Tyre and Sidon waited on him, to sue for peace. Agrippa having come early in the morning to the theatre, to give them audience, seated himself on his throne, dressed in a splendid robe of silver tissue. The rays of the sun darting upon his dress, gave it such a lustre and resplendence as the eyes of the spectators could scarcely endure. When, therefore, the king spoke to the Sidonians and Tyrians, the people, urged by his flatterers, exclaimed, "The voice of a god, not of a man!" Instead of rejecting these impious flatteries, Agrippa received them with complacency; but at that instant the angel of the Lord smote him, so that he perished. He was carried to his palace by his attendants, where he died, after five days, racked by tormenting pains, and devoured by worms.—*Calmet*.

for public exhibition. Perhaps, there has not been in the history of the world, an example of any city that in so short a space of time, rose to such an extraordinary height of splendor, as did this of Cæsarea, or exhibits a more awful contrast to its former magnificence, by the present desolate appearance of its ruins. Not a single inhabitant remains. Its theatres, once resounding with the shouts of multitudes, echo no other sound than the nightly cries of animals roaring for their prey. Dr. Clarke, who here speaks, did not visit Cæsarea; he saw its extensive ruins from off the coast; he was becalmed during the night, and heard the cries of these animals until day-break. If he had landed on these desolate shores, he would have soon discovered that the very ruins of its theatres no longer exist. The walls, that resounded to the shouts of the multitude, lie buried in sand, or have furnished materials for the erection of minarets and mosques.

LETTER XXIV.

Kaïpha,—**Malagamba**, ladies of the household,—**La Martine**,—**Mount Carmel**, considered the most beautiful mountain in Palestine, view from the summit,—Carmelite convent made an hospital during the French campaign in Syria,—Travellers hospitably entertained by the Carmelite friars,—Descendants of Elijah, Elisha, and the sons of the prophets,—Spot where the prophet Elijah prayed for rain,—Gehazi, sent to look towards the sea,—The showery cloud accompanied by thunder,—Evening when the rain fell,—Cave where Ahab was challenged by Elijah, to summon the false prophets of Baal,—Miracle for which Carmel is celebrated in the Sacred Writings,—Illustrations from Scripture,—Beauty and fertility of the mountain passed away,—Curse denounced by the prophet, fallen upon Carmel,—Chief interest of the mountain at the present day, owing to its name and situation, once covered with chapels and gardens,—Festive celebrations,—Music of the natives,—Dress and appearance of the women,—Arrival at Tyre, ancient birth-place of commerce, and mistress of the sea,—Contrast to its former wealth and power,—Isthmus built by Alexander the Great,—Ruins found in the environs,—Bodies of animals suffered to lie in the streets,—Quithmer, the dog of the Seven Sleepers.

A FEW hours' sail brought us to Kaïpha, on the southern extremity of the bay of Acre. Here we were hospitably

entertained at the house of the vice consul Malagamba, of whose family La Martine speaks in such terms of admiration. We saw in the ladies of the household no such charms as fascinated the French traveller. One of the party had a copy of La Martine, with the passage marked which mentioned Madam Malagamba and daughters. This was shown to a young stranger present who spoke French, and who appeared to be one of the family. He read the passage with a sort of ambiguous smile, and passed it off as a piece of badinage on the part of Mons. La Martine. The young lady so poetically described by the tourist, we afterwards discovered to be the wife of our new acquaintance.

We went in company with the consul to Mount Carmel, and halted at the convent, where a tri-colored flag was hoisted. A well laid out path leads to the summit, about 2000 feet from the level of the sea. Carmel is considered the most beautiful mountain in Palestine, shaded in many places with trees, and abounding in aromatic plants, which fill the air with odor. Plantations of olives are scattered along the base. The mount forms a majestic headland, ending in a promontory which constitutes the bay of Accho. From the summit opens a fine view of the country. South-eastward, we trace the plain of Esdraëlon; near us the brook Kishon flowing into the bay. Mount Tabor on the left, and the hills of Samaria in the distance.

The Carmelite convent is supposed to stand upon the spot where the prophet Elijah dwelt. It contains numerous apartments, each furnished with a bed, table and chair. Here the pilgrim stranger is gratuitously lodged and fed for a certain number of days.

During the French campaign in Syria, the Carmelite convent was used as an hospital for their sick and wounded; its airy and retired situation rendered it one of the most desirable spots in the world for such a purpose. Buckingham describes the monastery as a very ordinary building and entirely abandoned. Its general aspect is now quite the reverse of

this ; and the traveller, as he enters the hospitable convent, is entertained with cakes, wines, and the fruits of the country.

The Carmelite friars consider themselves the immediate descendants of Elijah, Elisha, and the sons of the prophets. They are a humble order of recluses, buried in their own shades, and dead to all the pleasures of the world. They are professed mendicants, and live by asking alms. They entertained us with fruits and a delicious sort of beverage distilled from herbs gathered from the mountain.

A short distance from the convent the spot is identified where tradition says the prophet prayed for rain, and where the prayer was answered by a showery cloud from out of the sea.* In another direction they show the cave where they suppose Ahab was challenged by Elijah to summon the false prophets of Baal, where the fire descended upon the burnt sacrifice. The miracle here wrought, and for which Carmel is celebrated, is mentioned in the book of Kings. "And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat and drink ; for there is a sound of abundance of rain. So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel ; and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees. And he said to his servant, Go up now, look towards the sea. And he went up, and looked, and said, there is nothing. And he said, Go again seven times. And it came to pass at the seventh time, that he said, Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand. And he said, Go up, say unto Ahab, prepare thy chariot,

* The editor of Calmet thinks the prophet Elijah was perfectly correct in choosing Mount Carmel, on the edge of the sea, for the scene of his contest with the priests of Baal, before Ahab. Also, in his going up the mount, and sending Gehazi to look toward the sea for that rain which he had predicted, but of which there was then no appearance. Mr. Taylor is of opinion, that this rain was accompanied by thunder ; for Elijah hints prophetically at "the sound of abundance of rain ;" this, however, is not determinate. Volney says that rain is to be expected "in the evening ;" it was toward evening when Elijah foretold rain to Ahab ; and it was now quite evening when the rain fell.

and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not. And it came to pass in the mean while, that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode, and went to Jezreel."—1 Kings xviii. 41—45.

The beauty and fertility of Carmel have in a great measure passed away. The curse denounced by Amos has fallen upon it. "The top of Carmel shall wither;" for it is now chiefly remarkable as a mass of barren and desolate rocks. A few cedars and olive trees may be seen along the declivity of the mountain, a solitary indication of the ancient fertility of Carmel. There are no longer rich pastures to render it the "habitation of shepherds," or to recall to the fancy the beauty of Carmel and of Sharon. It owes to its name, and to its prominent situation on the coast as a sentinel of the holy land, as Mr. Buckingham says, all the interest which can now be claimed for the mountain on which Elias vindicated the worship of Jehovah, and where thousands of holy Christians have spent their lives in meditation and prayer.

At one period the rocky caves of Carmel were sought as places of refuge by Christian worshippers. The mountain was then cultivated, and its heights adorned with chapels and gardens; a few scattered ruins are now seen, their sepulchral whiteness relieved by the verdure of the wild vine that creeps along the by-path.

On returning to the village, we encountered a motley group of men and women on their way to Carmel to celebrate some annual festival. They were chanting their rude songs with certain instrumental accompaniments, unlike the sounds of all other instruments. A traveller, who was regaled with this sort of music, very well describes it as a "noise produced by shrill pipes, and a wet finger drawn across a parched buffalo's hide, that may be likened to a duet got up between a peacock and hyena, sometimes produced to lull mad people, but sufficient of itself to drive most people mad." The women looked like the weird sisters on the blasted heath. Their faces were covered, leaving two small holes for the eyes :

a short brass chain, ornamented with small pieces of coin, fastened this covering, which descended like a winding-sheet from the head to the feet, and gave a ghastly look to the figure. The most unsightly objects were the women, with scarified skin, and tatooed faces, hands and arms. A button or bit of tinsel was fastened to the nostril; huge gewgaws, like those worn by the American savage, hung from their ears; their lips were dyed blue, and the stains used for the skin gave to it a livid hue like that of diseased flesh. In features and complexion they resembled the American Indian women,—small black eyes, high cheek bones, and copper colored cheeks; short nose and straight hair of jetty hue. There was a fierceness in their looks, increased by the flashing whiteness of their teeth. Their beads and other trinkets, with their infant children perched upon their backs, added to their likeness of our red women of the forest.

Taking leave of our worthy host at Kaïpha, a short voyage landed us at Tyre, the ancient birth-place of commerce, and once the mistress of the sea. In all naval engagements the Tyrian fleets were triumphant. Josephus relates that Salmaneser, king of Assyria, made war against the Tyrians, with a fleet of sixty ships manned by eight hundred rowers. The Tyrians had but twelve ships, yet they obtained the victory, dispersing the Assyrian fleet, and taking five hundred prisoners. Salmaneser then returned to Nineveh, leaving his land forces before Tyre, but they were unable to take the city. This expedition is supposed to have taken place in the reign of Hezekiah, king of Judah, over seven hundred years before Christ.

It was the rubbish of old Tyre, computed to be thirty furlongs long, that supplied materials for the gigantic mole constructed by Alexander, of two hundred feet in breadth, extending all the way from the continent to the island, a distance of three quarters of a mile. It has been greatly enlarged by the quantities of sand thrown up by the sea, which now covers a portion of the Isthmus. We were here in the midst

of the hottest of the summer. The heat crossing the sandy mole, exposed to the sun's fierce glare, was intolerable.

Fragments of sculptured marble were found in the environs, buried in sand; probably remains of Insular Tyre, as old Tyre, or the continental city, was in ruins up to the period of the Macedonian invasion. The ancient city never rose from its overthrow by Nebuchadnezzar; the Macedonian siege completed its destruction, and the wealth and commerce of Insular Tyre were for a time involved in the ruin, though it afterwards recovered from the effects of this invasion.

Many of the beautiful marbles just referred to, found in the environs of the ancient city, were thrust in the earth to designate the grave of some defunct Turk. We would have robbed the dead, had a safe opportunity offered, and thought it no sacrilege.

Groping through the town we everywhere encountered some nuisance: the bodies of animals are suffered to lie in the street, and taint the air. A dead dog breeds a contagion, no Turk disturbs the carcass. It is against his religion. The Mussulman believes that Quithmer, the dog of the Seven Sleepers, crept into Paradise, where he exercises the important office of presiding over letters missive. This superstition regards more the body of a lifeless dog, than that of a man, which may be thrown into a ditch or cast into the sea.

LETTER XXV.

Ancient continental Tyre never rose from its overthrow,—Illustrations from Scripture,—Denunciation uttered by the prophet fulfilled to the letter,—Variety of trades carried on within the walls of Tyre,—Dyeing an important trade among the Tyrians,—Beauty of the rich purple tint sung by the poets,—Discovery of the celebrated Tyrian dye,—Purple mentioned by Moses,—Wool of this color used as ornaments,—Illustration from Scripture,—History of Tyre identified with that of Syria,—Regains some measure of its ancient character as a trading town,—Paul touches at Tyre ; tarries there seven days,—Illustrations from Scripture,—Saracen invasion,—City retaken by the Crusaders,—Condition of Tyre when visited by Maundrell,—Remnants of old towers,—Present population of Tyre, houses,—Arrival at Sidon, its name derived from the eldest of the sons of Canaan, called “Zidon the Great,” by way of distinction,—Conquered by the Romans,—Sidonians noticed for their progress in the arts and sciences,—Celebrated for their inventions and skill to hew timber,—Illustration from Scripture,—Employed by Solomon in the building of the temple,—Destruction of Sidon foretold by the prophet,—The city betrayed into the hands of the enemy,—Despair of the inhabitants,—Beggary populace,—Amusements,—Turkish barber,—Superstition,—Hats, held in abomination by the Turks,—Druse, his contempt for the wearer of a hat, used as a mark of disgrace,—Nailing by the ears,—Narrow streets,—Men and beasts herding together,—Ravages of the plague,—Ancient port of Sidon, now an open roadstead,—Ceremony of landing,—Turkish consul.

PALE TYRUS, or the ancient continental city, never rose from its overthrow. Its destruction was complete ; its immense walls of one hundred and fifty feet in height were razed to the earth, its people put to the sword, or sold as slaves, and Tyre became a “terror” and a desolation.

“Therefore, saith the Lord God, Behold, I am against thee, O Tyrus, and will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the sea causeth his waves to come up. And they shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, and break down her towers : I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock. And it shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea : for I have spoken it, saith the

Lord God; and it shall become a spoil to the nations."—Ezekiel xxvi. 3, 4, 5.

The denunciation uttered by the prophet was fulfilled to the letter. She, "whose merchants were princes, and whose traffickers were the honorable of the earth," is become the desolate city, like the cities that are not inhabited. Even the ruins of the once famous capital have disappeared, so that, like Nineveh and Babylon, travellers cannot agree where it stood. "I will make thee a terror, and thou shalt be no more: though thou be sought for, yet shalt thou never be found again, saith the Lord God."—Ezekiel xxvi. 21.

The prophet Ezekiel furnishes a minute and interesting description of the trades as carried on by the Tyrians in the days of their wealth and splendor. In a commercial point of view, Tyre is represented to the world as an object of wonder and admiration. Amongst the variety of trades carried on within the walls of the ancient city, that of dyeing was the most important. The vestments worn by the inhabitants owe their magnificence to the rich purple tint so much admired, the beauty of which has been sung by the poets. The discovery of this celebrated color was the effect of mere accident. A dog having by chance eaten a shell-fish called *murex*, or *purpura*, and returning to his master with his lips tinged with a purple color, occasioned the discovery of this precious dye. The *murex* is said still to be found along the shores in the neighborhood of Tyre, and emits the purple fluid which once supplied the celebrated Tyrian dye.*

* Purple, it is well known, is much more ancient than the date usually assigned to its discovery. It is mentioned by Moses in several places. In the work of the Tabernacle he used wool of this color, as also in the ornaments worn by the high priest.

The Babylonians clothed their idols in habits of a purple and azure color: "Silver spread into plates is brought from Tarshish, and gold from Uphaz, the work of the workman, and of the hand of the founder: blue and purple is their clothing: they are all the work of cunning men."—Jeremiah x. 9.

Purple was a color used by princes and great men, by way of distinction. "There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day."—Luke xxvi. 19.

The history of Tyre was identified with that of Syria shortly after Ptolemy had invested the city. In the primitive days of Christianity it seems to have recovered from the effects of the Macedonian invasion, and to have regained some measure of its ancient character as a trading town. When Paul sailed into Syria he landed at Tyre, where he found a number of Christian believers, with whom he spent a week. "Now when we had discovered Cyprus, we left it on the left hand, and sailed into Syria, and landed at Tyre : for there the ship was to unlade her burden. And finding disciples, we tarried there seven days ; who said to Paul, through the Spirit, that he should not go up to Jerusalem."—Acts xxi. 3, 4.

Tyre shared the fate of the country in the Saracen invasion, in the beginning of the seventh century. It was reconquered by the Crusaders in the twelfth, and formed a royal domain in the kingdom of Jerusalem. In 1289 it was retaken by the Saracens, the Christians being permitted to remove with their effects.

When Maundrell visited Tyre its inhabitants consisted of a few wretches, harboring themselves in vaults, and subsisting by fishing. About the middle of the last century its port was repaired and enclosed, on the land side, with a wall twenty feet high. This wall has chiefly gone to ruin. Some twenty years after the period referred to, Tyre was visited by Volney, who describes it as a miserable village ; its exports consisting of a few sacks of corn, and its only merchant a solitary Greek who could hardly gain a livelihood.

The remnants of several old towers and of an aqueduct are still visible, but considered of no great antiquity. Tyre contains a few decent dwellings, with a population, perhaps, of fifteen hundred people. It is only within the last five-and-thirty years, as a late traveller says, that it has once more begun to lift its head from the dust.

A short sail brought us to Sidon, one of the most ancient cities in the world, deriving its name from the eldest of the

sons of Canaan, the great grandson of Noah.* It was once considered a city of no small consequence; in Scripture, by way of distinction, it was called "Zidon the Great." Joshua xi. 8. The ancient Sidonians were distinguished for their progress in the arts and sciences. They are said to have been the inventors of the alphabet and of arithmetic, and the first makers of transparent glass. They were celebrated also for their skill in casting and sculpture; for ship-building and hewing timber. "Now, therefore, command thou that they hew me cedar trees out of Lebanon; and my servants shall be with thy servants; and unto thee will I give hire for thy servants, according to all that thou shalt appoint: for thou knowest that there is not among us any that can skill to hew timber like unto the Sidonians."—1 Kings v. 6.

Sidon supplied Solomon with the principal workmen in the building of the temple. Notwithstanding its strength, importance and wealth, the destruction of Sidon was foretold by the prophets. This, according to history, was accomplished in the time of Ochus, King of Persia. The Sidonians having rebelled, he came against them with an army, and the city was betrayed into his hands. The inhabitants, in despair, set fire to their own houses, and perished in the flames, with their wives and children, to the number of forty thousand.

Sidon is now reduced to a mere Turkish town, with a few mean houses and a beggarly populace. At the threshold of almost every door groups are seen amusing themselves at different games. Here sits the barber, operating on the pate of a Turk, which the shaver makes as smooth as the palm of his hand, leaving a long tuft of hair on the crown of the head. This tuft is religiously cultivated by the devout Mussulman.

* The Sidonians continued long under their own government and kings, though sometimes tributary to the kings of Tyre. They were subdued successively by the Babylonians, Egyptians, Seleucidæ, and Romans, the latter of whom deprived them of their freedom.

By this appendage he believes, in what manner is not mentioned, that he will be caught up into Paradise.

The Christian covering of a hat is held in utter abomination by the Turk. This object of offence, among the followers of the prophet, denotes the "infidel dog." The Druse, the inhabitant of Lebanon, in common with the Turk, has the same contempt for the wearer of a hat. The severest malediction which one Druse can utter against another is, "May God put a hat upon your head!" As a mark of disgrace, a hat is nailed to the door of a traitor. Acts of fraud are punished in a similar manner; an offender is sometimes nailed by the ears, as in the case of the baker who was detected in fraudulent practices in the sale of bread. He was nailed by the ears to his own door for four and twenty hours. Such is the law. Were such a law introduced into all civilized countries, some one has said, it would raise the price of nails.

Sidon exhibits numerous objects of misery and want; throngs of such beset us in all directions. Like most Turkish towns, the streets are narrow, dirty and dark, many of them beneath archways like passages under ground. The poorer classes live in low stone huts, or cells above ground, where they exist amidst poverty, darkness and dirt. Here man and beast herd together. Cats, dogs, goats and sheep mix in common with naked children, who, like swine, roll and nuzzle in the mud of the streets. Here human beings live and die like the brutes that perish. Every third person seemed a beggar, or a subject for the lazaret house. The plague yearly sweeps off more or less of the inhabitants; contagion hangs in the air. The ills of life follow the tracks of the Turk; over his dominion walks the pestilence, and the soil of the graveyard is fattened with his bones.

The once magnificent port of Sidon is now entirely obstructed. Fragments remain of the enormous stones which composed the moles of the harbor, which is now an open roadstead exposed to the violence of wind and wave. The water was too shallow to admit of our reaching shore in our

own boats. A party of fishermen landed us on their shoulders, to the great amusement of a motley group of men, women and children, who seemed to regard us as objects of no small curiosity. We were conducted through various gloomy avenues to the residence of the Turkish Consul, who, on our arrival, had hoisted our national flag which now waved over the roof of his house. He seemed proud in displaying our colors, which had been presented to him in return for some civilities which he had shown to a party of American officers who, on a former occasion, had landed at Sidon.

LETTER XXVI.

Turkish ladies' dress,—Nails and eyelashes stained with the powder of henna,—Purposes for which henna is employed, purely an article of female luxury,—Paste of the pulverized leaves of henna applied to the feet and hands,—Mummies discovered with the tincture of henna on their nails,—Powder of henna essential to female beauty,—Fashion of dyeing the hands and nails, necessity of conforming to it, all classes employ the same means to acquire this sort of ornament, spoils fine hands more than it decorates them,—Sole of the foot loaded with the same color, a whimsical decoration,—Markets constantly supplied with the dried leaves of henna, a commodity of indispensable use, lasting color of the dye,—Custom of dyeing the nails known to the Egyptians,—Refinement of the Egyptian ladies in painting their fingers,—Practice of staining the hands and nails referred to in the Sacred Writings,—Illustrations from Scripture,—Henna, a plant, grateful to the sight and smell, a nosegay of beauty, its value among the women of the East, mentioned in the Song of Songs,—Turkish consul,—Chibouque, or pipe, a matter of ornament as well as use,—Smoking à la Turquie,—Sweet oblivion of tobacco,—Turkish hospitality,—Honesty, the national trait of the Turks,—Custom of putting off the shoes,—Commerce of Sidon,—Arrival at Bairout,—supposed to be the Berothai of Scripture,—Traces of the ancient harbor,—Remains of the ancient Berytus.

DURING our visit at the Consul's residence we had an opportunity of seeing the ladies of the household; they were just returning from the bath. The white loose robes which

descended from the head to the feet, entirely shrouded their figures, leaving but a part of the face exposed. They wore the Turkish slipper, which, unlike the modern lady's shoe, hides the shape of the foot, and leaves the heel uncovered. The eye-lids and eye-lashes were darkened by the stains of an odoriferous shrub called henna, or al-henna. Their large dark eyes and long black eye-lashes formed a strong contrast to their sallow, sickly-looking faces. The nails were stained with the powder of henna, a commodity in common use among the women of the East, and valued by them as a thing indispensable in giving beauty to the skin.*

The purpose for which henna is employed is mentioned by Sonnini in his *Travels in Egypt*. He says:—

“If large black eyes, which they are at pains to darken still more, be essential to Egyptian female beauty, it likewise requires, as an accessory of first-rate importance, that the hands and nails should be died red. This last fashion is fully as general as the other, and not to conform to it would be reckoned indecent. The women could no more dispense with this daubing than with their clothes. Of whatever condition, of whatever religion they may be, all employ the same means to acquire this species of ornament, which the empire of fashion alone could perpetuate, for it assuredly spoils fine hands much more than it decorates them. The animated whiteness of the palm of the hand, the tender rose-color of the nails, are effaced by a dingy layer of a reddish, or orange-colored drug. The sole of the foot,—the epidermis of which is not hardened by long or frequent walking, and which daily friction makes still thinner,—is likewise loaded with the same color. It is

* The henna, or *Lawsonia spinosa*, which is purely an article of female luxury, flowers from May till August. To obtain a deep yellow for their nails, the ladies make a paste of the pulverized leaves, and bind it on their hands and feet all night. The dye lasts for three or four weeks, after which it requires to be renewed. This custom is so ancient among the Egyptians, as well as other eastern nations, that mummies are occasionally discovered with a similar tincture on their nails.—*Nat. Hist. of Egypt*.

with the greenish powder of the dried leaves of the henna that the women procure for themselves a decoration so whimsical. The markets are constantly supplied with it, as a commodity of habitual and indispensable use. They dilute it in water, and rub the soft paste it makes on the parts which they mean to color : they are wrapped up in linen, and at the end of two or three hours the orange hue is strongly impressed on them. Though the women wash both hands and feet several times a day, with luke-warm water and soap, this color adheres for a long time, and it is sufficient to renew it about every fifteen days ; that of the nails lasts much longer,—nay, it passes for ineffaceable. In Turkey, likewise, the women make use of henna, but apply it to the nails only, and leave to their hands and feet the color of nature. It would appear that the custom of dyeing the nails was known to the ancient Egyptians, for those of mummies are most commonly of a reddish hue. But the Egyptian ladies refine still further on the general practice ; they, too, paint their fingers space by space only ; and, in order that the color may not lay hold of the whole, they wrap them round with thread at the proposed distances, before the application of the color-giving paste, so that when the operation is finished, they have the fingers marked circularly, from end to end, with small orange-colored belts. Others,—and this practice is more common among Syrian dames,—have a mind that their hands should present the sufficiently disagreeable mixture of black and white.” This practice of staining the hands and nails is supposed to explain the phraseology in Deuteronomy. “ Then thou shalt bring her home to thine house ; and she shall shave her head, and pare her nails.”—Deut. xxi. 12. The tincture of henna is likewise used by the men in anointing the beard, and the long tuft of hair on the crown of the head. They affirm that it strengthens the organs, prevents the falling off of the hair and beard, and that it banishes vermin.

The henna is a tall shrub, endlessly multiplied in Egypt : a plant most grateful to both the sight and the smell. “ The

flowers," adds Sonnini, " whose shades are so delicate, diffuse around the sweetest odors, embalm the gardens and apartments which they embellish ; they accordingly form the usual nosegay of beauty ; the women take pleasure in decking themselves with these beautiful clusters of fragrance, in adorning their apartments with them, in carrying them to the bath in their hands ;—in short, they attach to this possession a value so high that they would willingly appropriate it exclusively to themselves, and that they suffer with impatience Christian women and Jewesses to partake of it with them."

The henna grows in great quantities in the vicinity of Rosetta, and constitutes one of the principal ornaments of the beautiful gardens which surround that city. A late traveller, who examined this plant says, that its root, which penetrates to a great depth with the utmost ease, swells to a large size in a soil, soft, rich and mixed with sand. It is prepared chiefly in the Saïd, from whence it is distributed over all the cities of Egypt.

It is thought that the clusters of cyprus of the Song of Songs can be nothing else but the very clusters of the flowers of the henna : nor is it at all astonishing, it has been remarked, that a flower so delicious should have furnished to Oriental poesy agreeable allusions, and amorous comparisons. The flower of henna is disposed in clusters, and the women of the East, who dearly love the smell of it, are fond of carrying it in the spot which the text indicates, in their bosom.

From this digression we return to our host at Sidon, who received us with much courtesy, and entertained us with lemonade, coffee and pipes. The Turk fumigates the day long ; his pipe is his constant companion ;—it is a matter of ornament as well as use. In this instrument, as in his horse-trappings, the Turk is allowed to be sumptuous. Our host at Sidon furnished us with specimens of the Turkish chibouque, or pipe, which varied in length from eight to ten feet, with amber mouth-pieces and other decorations. The mild, fragrant weed is usually exhaled through the olfactory channels ;

this is smoking *à la Turque*. The Mussulman forgets all human ills in the sweet oblivion of tobacco :

“gently stroking
His beard, he puffs his pipe's ambrosial gales,
As if he had three lives, as well as tails.”

The Turk is as free in his hospitality as he is honest in his dealings. This honesty, however, among the Turks, is not believed to be the offspring of justice. Their want of honor in their political contracts has caused them to be suspected in the other relations of life. Still, honesty is admitted to be the national trait. Their word, as yet, has not been brought into discredit. Some assert that the virtue in question among them arose from the determination of following a contrary course from that adopted by the Greeks, who were fraudulent in their dealings; thus forming a character for honesty on the foundation of a bad motive. This, as very properly remarked, is considering the subject too curiously. However vicious the Turks may be as political traffickers, says a writer well acquainted with their character, give the credit due them in the ordinary affairs of life, for the integrity of their word, and for the honesty of their dealings.

The attendants at the Consul's house were busy in showing every attention, and supplying us with various refreshments. The servants, as is the custom, left their slippers at the door as they entered. A neglect of this observance on their part, would be repaid with the bastinado.

Sidon has some trade, and is yet the principal sea-port of Damascus. Rice and coffee are imported from Egypt; other produce from different European ports. Damascus supplied the market with silk; cotton, wool and corn are its exports. The fruits here are delicious; the fig, melon, and the grape abound, and are equal in quality and size to the finest in the Mediterranean.

Early in September we anchored in the bay of Bairout, the ancient Berytus, considered in point of situation the best of all the towns of Palestine. Bairout has more the appearance

of a business place than any port along the coast of Syria. Seen at a distance, the town presents a pleasing picture of towers, arches and edifices of white stone, interspersed with dark, green foliage and a few cultivated spots. The lofty heights of Lebanon rise from beyond the environs, which are covered with mulberry trees and plantations of the olive and the fig.

Berytus is thought to be Berothai of Scripture, the city conquered by David. "And from Betah, and from Berothai of Hadanezer, King David took exceeding much brass."—2 Sam. viii. 8. Traces may be seen of the ancient harbor, now a mass of rubbish and sand, the deposit of a long succession of years. Here, as in Sidon, houses stand where vessels once anchored. The pillars and fragments of granite, which may be seen under water, show where the sea has encroached on the land. Westward of the town a late traveller thought that he had discovered the remains of the ancient Berytus. The ruins of the aqueducts and cyclopæan walls were visible; the baths, mosaic pavements, and colonnades spoken of, were probably seen through the imaginative optics of the traveller.

LETTER XXVII.

Turkish burial-grounds,—Mortal strife between two combatants,—St. George and the Dragon,—Remains of the ancient city,—Sarcophagi,—Ancient inscription,—Poverty and wretchedness of the people,—Cultivation of the mulberry,—Commerce of Bairout,—Journey to Baalbec,—Route across the mountains of Lebanon,—Arab hut,—Suspicion excited by our appearance,—Arab hospitality, his faith never violated,—Wolves and jackals,—Mount Lebanon marked as affording beautiful images and metaphors to the inspired writers,—Illustrations from Scripture,—View from Lebanon heights,—Excessive heat,—Goats,—Water carried in dry goat-skins, its unpleasant taste,—Zahle,—Mud-hut, how supported, materials used for its construction, roof of the hut, a place of resort during the hot months,—Narrow passes,—Majestic scene beheld from the Sannin, the imaginary view of Volney,—Variety of temperature,—Saying of the Arabian poets,—Petrifactions,—Valley of Cælo-Syria,—Bekaa, or plain, supposed to be that of Aven mentioned in Scripture,—Temple of the sun, or Heliopolis of Baalbac, believed to have been built by enchanters, its immense proportions and ponderous blocks of stone,—Sculptures of the temple referred to a degenerate period of art,—Walls overloaded with lace-work of marble.

VESSELS arriving at Bairout during the winter months find a safe anchorage in a small bay north of the town; a lofty promontory forms the upper side of this bay. Upon the cliff which overhangs the south side is the Turkish burial-ground which was the scene of combat between the Greeks and Turks a few years since. A traveller visiting the place was shown the spot where two of the combatants grappled in mortal strife, and rolling over the precipice were dashed to pieces in each other's arms.

In the vicinity of Bairout there is a certain well, the history of which is somewhat famous. In the adjacent plain, so says the legend, the patron saint of England, the renowned Saint George, "dwelled and killed the dragon." Near this spot is a well, the mouth of which is said to be the hole from which the dragon issued. A mosque now stands there which was formerly a chapel dedicated to the patron saint.

Fragments of antiquity lie buried within and without the

town. Towards the point of Bairout Captain Frankland discovered the ruins of a fountain, near which are the remains of the ancient city, some houses of which are still standing entire and as yet unexplored.

A farmer in the neighborhood of Bairout recently dug up two sarcophagi. They were found a few feet beneath the surface of the earth, and in good preservation. The various sepulchral devices and emblematic figures with which they were ornamented were executed in good taste, and appeared as fresh as when first wrought by the chisel. They were purchased by Commodore Elliott, shipped on board the *Constitution*, and brought to the United States. The largest has the following inscription :

IVLIA·C·FIL·
MAMMAEA
VIXIT·ANN·XXX·

Bairout, like most towns inhabited by the Turks, exhibits the dismal aspect of narrow, dirty streets, gloomy stone houses, and a people sunk in poverty and wretchedness. Many of the inhabitants chiefly subsist on the fig and prickly pear, which the neighboring mountains produce in abundance. Here the mulberry is cultivated for rearing the silk-worm.

Bairout has some commerce in the importation of tobacco, coffee, and other commodities. Among their exports are the wines of the country, which are cheap, and in good repute. They have no corn. Damascus and the province of Acre supply them in this article.

Many civilities were shown us by the French consul, the acting American agent at this place. Through him we were furnished with guides, &c., on our route to Baalbec, a distance of some fifteen leagues. We pushed forward about midnight; our journey lay across the mountains of Lebanon, through ravines, amid solitudes and precipices of rock.

Our first night, or morning rather, was passed at an Arab's hut. The poor peasant whose slumbers we had disturbed

was loath to admit us into his hovel, which was lighted with the dim gleam of a solitary lamp. Our sudden appearance excited suspicion; he glanced at our weapons and strange looking persons, with doubts as to who we were and what we wanted. We soon convinced him that we had not come as enemies. We called for coffee in words and by signs which he did not seem to understand. The sight of money, however, the universal interpreter, appeared to sharpen his apprehension. Soon a fire was blazing, a pot of coffee was furnished, and some cold hard-boiled eggs, not the better for keeping. Our host now grew better acquainted with his guests; we had broken bread with him, and had drank of his cup,—a bond of good fellowship. To share a meal with an Arab is a signal of friendship; to partake his hospitality ensures his protection.

At daylight we were to be on the move; but it was in vain to think of sleep; we sallied forth and watched for the first streak of dawn. It was the hush of night, undisturbed, save by the howl of the wolf and the scream of the jackal. The full clear moon shone down without a cloud. Around and beyond towered the lofty heights of Lebanon, "that goodly mountain," which Moses with such ardor longed to see, and marked in Scripture as affording so many glowing images and beautiful metaphors to the inspired writers.* "I pray thee,

* In the phrase, the "glory of Lebanon," it is supposed by the commentators that Isaiah refers to the verdure constantly maintained on Lebanon, and to the magnificent cedars, pines, cypresses, &c., which covered it. "It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it."—Isaiah xxxv. 2. "The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fig tree, the pine tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary."—Isa. x. 13. Lebanon is taken for the cedars of Lebanon. Solomon's palace, described in the seventh chapter of Kings, is called the "house of the forest of Lebanon;" it was supported, probably, as Mr. Taylor infers, by pillars of cedar, as numerous as trees in the forest. When we read, "the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon," the majestic cedars it is supposed furnish the simile: so, "he cast forth his roots as Lebanon," the cedars, not the mountain, are implied. The temple of Jerusalem is also called Lebanon. Speaking of the future desolation of the temple by the Romans, the prophet says, "Open thy doors, O Lebanon, that the fire may devour thy cedars."—Zech. xi. 1.

let me go over, and see the good land that is beyond Jordan, that goodly mountain, even Lebanon."—Deut. iii. 25.

At peep of dawn we were astir, slowly threading our way down broken precipices, and up craggy steepes of rock. Morning opened on the mountain scenery of Lebanon; Bairout lay in long distance beneath along the margin of the sea. Beyond, hills peeping o'er hills, presented a dreary prospect to travellers badly mounted, journeying through houseless tracks and places laid waste. The heat, which was excessive, was increased from the open country which is totally barren of pasture or shade. A few goats were occasionally seen nibbling the scant herbage which grew about the rocks.

Amid these arid wastes we occasionally halted near some delicious spring, fresh gushing from the bosom of the rock. Here we enjoyed the luxury of a cooling draught; it was indeed a luxury,—travelling through a parched country where water is usually carried in dried goat-skins, sometimes in the skin of an ox, which discolors the water and imparts to it a very unpleasant taste.

We halted at Zahle, a town chiefly inhabited by Greek Catholics, and passed the night under cover of a mud-hut. The faint rays of a dim lamp showed us our habitation festooned with cobwebs, and tenanted by reptiles that now ventured from their hiding holes. On the ground a few old mats were spread, our beds for the night. We had sufficient leisure to examine our domicile, the roof of which was supported by two wooden posts, with beams placed over them crosswise. Brushwood and the like substances were laid over the rafters; these composed the roof of the house. The whole was covered with the thick branches of the oak tree, plastered with moist earth sufficiently tempered to resist the action of the weather. Here they resort in the cool of the evening, and here they sleep during the oppressive heat of the summer months.

It is a common practice in the East, during the hot season, to sleep in the open air, with a light covering over the body. At nightfall, on long journeys, they lie scattered over the plains,

as Volney says of the Egyptian Arabs, like flocks of sheep, with the clothes they have taken off spread beneath them, and themselves covered from head to foot by the large handkerchief, or sack rather, which they wear in the day time across their shoulders. To those accustomed to a colder climate, this sleeping in the open air may appear strange; it is a custom, however, not unfrequently noticed in Scripture, and is adopted without hesitation throughout the East.

At sunrise we reached the high grounds of Lebanon, and often halted to survey the vast region which opened before us. Crossing some places the path afforded barely space sufficient for horse and rider to pass. At times we were hovering on the edges of precipices where men and cattle below seemed dwindled to specks; the brain turned as the eye measured down the dizzy depths.

It was the view beheld from the heights of Lebanon that filled Volney's mind with such rapture. "To enjoy fully the majestic scene," he says, "you must ascend the very point of Lebanon, or the *Sannin*. There, on every side, spreads a horizon without bounds; while in clear weather the sight is lost over the desert which extends to the Persian gulf, and over the sea which bathes the coast of Europe. The beholder seems to command the whole world, while the wandering eye now surveying the successive chains of mountains, transports the imagination in an instant from Antioch to Jerusalem." The highest points of Libanus afford many grand and extensive views. We saw no scene, however, like the one described by Volney, who must have imagined the unlimited view which he says this mountain affords across the eastern desert, to the Euphrates. From his description, both of the mountain and the cedars, there is reason to believe, with Mr. Buckingham, that Volney travelled but little over it.

Fragments of marine bodies, and other matters extraneous to these mountains, were gathered on and about the summits. On the higher elevation we found numerous petrifications of

shell and other fish, many in a high state of preservation. The petrified clam was seen in abundance.

The long valley of Cælo-Syria leading to the territory of Baälbec was seen stretching far beneath us. The Bekah, the southern extremity of the ancient Cælo-Syria, is the name applied to the country lying beneath the lofty ridges of Lebanon and anti-Lebanon. It varies little in width from one extremity to the other. This valley is supposed to be the plain of Aven mentioned in Scripture. "I will cut off the inhabitants from the plain of Aven."—Amos i. 5. They have been "cut off," the place has become a desert. This plain, which has a rich soil and is well watered, leads to Baälbec, to the ruins of a once magnificent temple standing in the midst of a wilderness, and far from the borders of the sea.

The temple of the Sun, or Heliopolis of Baalbec, deriving its name from the divinity to whom it was dedicated. the Arabs call the mighty ruin, the wonder of the desert built by enchanter. It indeed seems the work of superhuman power; nor is it surprising that it should be so considered by a people totally ignorant of the arts of civilized life.

A close inspection only gives the true idea of the temple, of its immense proportions and walls of ponderous stone. The length of the edifice is nearly twice that of St. Peter's in Rome. Its extreme width is estimated at four hundred and fifty feet. But these colossal dimensions do not surprise us when we look at the enormous blocks of stone that are placed at such heights within the walls, one above the other.

It may be asked, by what mechanical contrivance hewn rock of seventy-two feet in length, and corresponding depth and breadth, could be conveyed into its present position. Solid stone sixty feet long, and twelve broad and deep are raised to the distance of twenty feet from the ground. These stones are considered to be the most enormous masses that human hands or human machinery ever moved into a wall. "I am not acquainted with any building," says Dr. Richardson, "where

we can find stones one half, or even a fourth of the dimensions of those which compose the edifice under consideration."

We bore away several exquisite specimens of carved work in marble. A recent traveller supposes, notwithstanding the admirable sculptures of the arches, cornices, &c., that they display a workmanship evidently belonging to a degenerate period of art. The only fault, he adds with truth, is too much richness. The walls are overloaded with a lace-work of marble, and the stone groans beneath the weight of its own luxuriance.

LETTER XXVIII.

Remains of a small temple near Baälbec,—Destruction, not restoration, the order of the day among the Turks,—Convent at Ramla plundered by the Turks,—Turkish fanaticism,—Burning of the Ptolemean library, account of its destruction by the Saracens considered to be erroneous,—Destruction of the Greek academies and colleges during the troubles of the Revolution,—Village schoolmaster bastinadoed by order of a Turkish commandant,—Blighting hand of Islamism,—Moslem creed inculcates no toleration for infidels,—Epithet bestowed upon a Christian,—Turkish government ruins the labor of past ages and destroys the hopes of future time,—Empire of the Moslem on the wane,—Mutilation of the temple at Baalbec,—Beautiful works of the chisel prostrate and defaced,—Modern Goths,—Temple of the Sun, its decorations, erection referred to the age of Antoninus Pius,—Principal ruins at Baalbec described by a recent traveller,—Inclosure of the temple, used as a fortification, a jumble of ancient and modern building,—Hexagonal court,—Quadrangle,—Vaulted passage beneath,—Court containing the great temple, beauty of the structure,—Sculptures of admirable execution,—Depredations,—Portico and pronaos destroyed,—Feelings excited standing beneath the key-stone,—Eagle grasping a caduceus,—Interior of the temple encumbered by fragments and rubbish,—Ancient wall, its immense proportions,—Huge blocks of stone,—Erection of the temple referred by the people to diabolical agency.

NEAR the principal ruins at Baälbec are the remains of a small temple which once served as a place of Christian wor-

ship. An earthquake has displaced almost every stone in the edifice, and not a pillar preserves its perpendicular position. So perfect are all the parts hanging together in a loose disjointed state, that were it in any other country it might easily be restored; but, as truly remarked, destruction, not restoration, is the order of the day among the followers of Mahomet.* Nor is this all: the Mussulman shuts his eyes on all improvements known to have emanated from the enemies of the prophet. By a like fanaticism, the column and the temple fall before him, and the labors of learning are turned into air.†

* It was not without the most urgent solicitation that the friars were permitted to repair their convent at Ramla, which had been plundered by the Turks, as if it were a maxim among the followers of the prophet, who by their dominion continue to afflict and disgrace the finest parts of Palestine, that the progress of ruin and decay should never be arrested. When Volney was at Ramla a commander resided there in a serai, the walls and floors of which were on the point of tumbling down. He asked one of the inferior officers why his master did not at least pay some attention to his own apartment. The reply was, "If another shall obtain my place next year, who will repay the expense?"

† "Heavens! what a pile! whole ages perish there,
And one bright blaze turns learning into air."

Alluding to the emperor of China, the same who built the great wall between China and Tartary. He destroyed all the books and learned men of that empire.

"Thence to the south extend thy gladdened eyes,
There rival flames with equal glory rise;
From shelves to shelves see greedy Vulcan roll,
And lick up all the physic of the soul."

Referring to the Caliph Omar, who having conquered Egypt, caused his general to burn the Ptolemean library, on the gates of which was this inscription:

"THE PHYSIC OF THE SOUL."

In justice to the Turks, it should be stated, that the account of the destruction of the Alexandrian Library by the Saracens is not considered to be correct. A crowd of fanatic Christians, headed by their Archbishop Theodosius, stormed the Serapion, or temple of Jupiter Serapis. At that time the library was partly burnt and partly dispersed. Towards the close of the fourth century, the historian Orosius saw only the empty shelves. The common account therefore, says a late historian, is an erroneous one, which makes the library in question to have been destroyed by the Saracens, at the command of the Caliph Omar, A. D. 642, and to have furnished fuel, during six months, to the 4000 baths of Alexandria.

Wherever the blighting hand of Islamism extends, commerce and manufactures have few followers, art and science languish, the very earth seems to be blasted, and agriculture itself has hardly an existence. The creed of the Turk inculcates no toleration for infidels, and he prefers extermination to conversion. The best epithet bestowed upon a Christian is "dog," and this is sometimes changed for other terms of reproach.

History seems to verify the remark, that the Turkish government ruins the labor of past ages and destroys the hopes of future times. But the empire of the Mussulman is on the wane, and he begins to feel that other masters are destined to rule him.

The rapacity of the Turks has mutilated the temple at Baälbec: they have contributed to the destruction of its remains from the desire of possessing the iron pins and cramps with which the blocks of masonry are joined. Most of the beautiful works of the chisel lay prostrate and defaced. We saw the work of destruction going on upon the spot; hammers were heard in various directions, employed in striking ornaments from cornices, architraves, and other sculptured marbles. For a mere pittance you might bribe these modern Goths to mutilate or destroy the finest works of art.

Few architectural remains of the old world can compare in decoration with those of Baälbec; and yet the temple, it is said, was unfinished as it was left by the ancients; a fact not commonly noticed by travellers. The whole interior of this temple, which bears marks of Roman workmanship, is covered with ornaments, though no date can be assigned, as Dr. Richardson observes, as to when the temple was reconstructed or when it was overthrown. Its erection is referred to the age

It is well known that most of the Greek academies and colleges were destroyed during the troubles of the revolution. The most celebrated institution was at Scio; this college was involved in the general wreck of the city. About the period now referred to, a Turkish commandant happening to pass the school in a village while the pupils were taking their lessons, had the master dragged out and bastinadoed. It was dangerous then to complain.

of Antoninus Pius. The principal part of the present edifice is supposed to have been built on the site of one much more ancient.

The author of "Three Weeks in Palestine" has furnished an accurate description of the ruins at Baälbec, including the pillared remains and architectural ornaments of the great Temple of the Sun, the wonder of Syria. This traveller's account will give the reader a good idea of the grandeur and extent of these noble ruins. We can share with the writer the pleasure he felt when he tells us that the hours which he spent among these most interesting relics of the ancient days, flew away like so many minutes.

The enclosure in which the principal ruins stand has been used by the Turks as a fortification ; consequently, as this traveller says, it exhibits a strange jumble of ancient and modern building ; walls having been built up with fragments of cornices, architraves and pillars, piled in most admired disorder. The chief entrance is through a screen, leading into a hexagonal court flanked by two square battlemented towers, evidently the work of those who converted the edifice into a place of defence, as their character is totally at variance with that of the rest ; they are further defended by a wall of fragments connecting them in front, a breach in which affords the only means of ingress.

From the hexagonal court, which is quite in ruins, you enter a quadrangle of considerable size, round which formerly run arcades, which exist no longer, but the walls from which they sprung still remain, having two alcoves or semicircular recesses on each side. A row of blind windows or niches for statues, ornamented with rich mouldings and architraves, and divided by pilasters, extends the whole length of these walls, above which there is an attic story with similar mouldings. The ground in the centre is elevated ; but whether it is owing to the accumulation of rubbish, or the remains of the altar upon which smoked the hecatombs of Baal, must be left to conjecture. Beneath this quadrangle there is a vaulted passage

running all round, sufficiently wide and lofty to admit of a carriage being driven through it.*

This quadrangle leads into the court containing the great temple, which stands on the left, while on the right rise six tall columns, the remains of a similar sanctuary. It is true what is said of this temple,—it is wonderfully perfect; there is nothing in Italy that surpasses it, indeed, we may say, nothing that equals it. The architecture is of the Corinthian order, and belongs to the most classical age of Roman art. It is built of compact primitive limestone; the pillars, of which there are fourteen on each side and eight at the extremities, were over sixty feet in height, composed of three pieces joined together by a square piece of iron fitted in the sockets in the centre; one or two of these had slipped from their pedestals, and reclined unbroken against the wall of the temple. They were crowned by a noble architrave and beautifully carved cornice. The peristyle was covered by an arched roof of stone, cut in patterns, with medallions in high relief of mythological subjects, finely wrought. The soffits and ceilings are paneled in lozenge form, with representations of Jupiter and his eagle, Leda and the swan, Diana with her bow and crescent, and various busts in the costume of emperors and empresses. All the members of the interior entablatures are loaded with a profusion of ornaments, and representations of fruits and flowers, and ears of corn of admirable execution. Most of these were in good preservation when Dr. Richardson visited the temple; the depredations since committed within the walls have swept off large portions of these and similar works of art.

The portico, which once displayed a double row of columns, is destroyed, and the original entrance closed up, so that one is compelled to enter through a hole in the wall. The pronaos is also much dilapidated, and the pillars that supported the roof are gone. The doorway leading thence into the body of the temple is twenty-one feet in width; the mouldings and

* Three Weeks in Palestine and Lebanon.

other ornaments are the richest imaginable. The lintel is composed of three huge blocks, two on either side entering far into the wall, the third of the form of a wedge; the key-stone has slipped from its position, and hangs by so slight a tenure as to excite the feelings of Damocles in those who stand beneath. Upon this is carved a splendid relief of an eagle grasping a caduceus in his talons, and surrounded by a wreath, the two ends of which he holds in his beak. The interior walls of the temple have a double row of pilasters with niches for statues between them; at the upper end is the recess where stood the image of the deity to which it was dedicated. The interior is much encumbered by fragments and rubbish, and without are seen lying, in every direction, broken shafts, capitals, and other architectural remains, which would supply a rich treat either to the architect or the painter.

But, observes the writer from whom we abstract these notes, beautiful as are these structures, and replete with interest and delight to any person pretending to the slightest taste for works of art, they yield as objects of wonder to the wall which encircles them, or rather, upon which they stand; for their base is nearly on a level with its top. Mäundrell, writing in an age when they were little known, seems almost afraid to hazard the relation. "Here," he says, "is another curiosity of this place, which a man has need to be well assured of his credit before he ventures to relate, lest he should be thought to strain the privilege of a traveller too far. That which I mean is a large piece of old wall which encompassed these structures last described." The apparent length of this vast pile is estimated at little short of a thousand feet, and four hundred in width, the whole composed of blocks of stone of such magnitude as to warrant the belief that no modern mechanical contrivance could convey such masses from any distance to their present positions. The least of these blocks would excite astonishment were they met with elsewhere; but here, eclipsed by three enormous monsters, lying consecutively in same course of the building, about twenty-five

feet from the ground, they are overlooked as trifles in comparison. The three stones in the wall may be estimated in length by the remaining block in the quarry from which they were hewn, which was found to be sixty-eight feet in length, fourteen in height, and sixteen and a half in breadth. If, then, adds the traveller who accurately took these dimensions, the three stones in the wall be of the same size, which appeared to be the case, they would occupy a space of sixty-eight yards. One is not surprised that the erection of the temple should be referred by the people to diabolical agency. And indeed, as before remarkēd, it would seem that no other but superhuman power could have conveyed hither such enormous blocks of stone, and have succeeded in placing them at such heights, one upon another.

LETTER XXIX.

Temple of the Sun, not mentioned by the classic authors, referred to by John of Antioch, period of its erection lost in uncertainty,—Temple at Baälbec, a monument superior to the Pyramids of Egypt,—Ruins by moonlight, beauty and grandeur of the scene,—Emotions of Takir el Deen on witnessing the devastation he had caused to be committed upon the ruins at Baälbec,—Exclamation of the Disdar on beholding the destruction of the Athenian marbles,—Lord Elgin and his accomplices,—Curse of Minerva,—Thoughts suggested standing beneath the ruins at Baälbec,—Passages from Manfred,—Coliseum at Rome, principal surviving link between the ancient and modern capital, noblest monument of the imperial city,—Palace of the Cæsars,—Remains of the temple at Baälbec supposed to be those of the House of the Forest of Lebanon,—Illustrations from Scripture,—Baalath, the city built by Solomon, identified with Baälbec, referred to by the Jewish historian,—Impoverished condition of the town,—Oppressive taxation,—Baälbec garrisoned by Roman soldiers,—Temple of the Sun converted to a church, rapidly fell into ruins,—Common fate of cities,—Troy, Babylon and Memphis known only from books,—Baälbec and Palmyra left to tell their own story.

It is noticed as somewhat remarkable that no reference has been made by the classic authors to the temple of the Sun.

John of Antioch is quoted as the only writer who has mentioned the edifice ; from him we learn, as already stated, that to Antoninus Pius is to be assigned the honor of erecting that magnificent monument of Roman architecture, the temple at Baälbec. The period, however, of its erection is lost in much uncertainty, if not in entire obscurity. Some consider the age of Antoninus Pius as the most probable of its date ; others, as we have said, conjecture that the principal part of the present edifice was erected on the site of one of a much earlier period. But we leave to the antiquary the task of searching for the origin or the age of these magnificent remains, satisfied ourselves with having beheld, in the midst of the desert, among a tribe of barbarians, a monument singly considered superior to the pyramids of Egypt. Standing amidst its fallen columns we behold the wrecks of the grand and the beautiful. A field of ruins opens on all around, resembling the split rocks of some iron-bound coast, or piles tumbled in masses from the shock of an earthquake. Like the Coliseum at Rome, the temple of the Sun should be seen by moonlight. The stillness of the night, the whispering echoes, the moonlight shadows and the awful grandeur of the impending ruins, form a scene of romantic sublimity, and awaken in the breast of the beholder the deepest feelings of awe.

A traveller describing the effect produced as the shadows of evening gradually fell upon the beautiful columns and massive walls of the temple, gives the following glowing picture of the scene ; it is true to nature, and is drawn by the hand of an artist :

“ The last rays of the setting sun, ere he sank in a flood of glory behind Lebanon, were gilding the upper portion of the temples and columns, while the gradually encroaching shadows of the mountains had thrown the gigantic platform upon which they stood into obscurity. The colossal magnitude of this enormous mass, the effect of which was heightened to sublimity by the uncertain light, filled the breast with the deepest impressions of awe. It appeared to be the work of

some mightier being than man. The cyclopæan remains in Italy dwindled to nothing in comparison; while above, shooting up into the twilight, rose the columns of a later age, so light, so beautiful, so exquisitely proportioned! The contrast was wonderfully striking. It was Ariel mounted on a mammoth's back."*

It is by moonlight that these majestic relics are seen to the best effect; by that wide and tender light,

" Which softens down the hoar austerity
Of rugged desolation, and fills up,
As it were anew, the gaps of centuries."

Standing beneath these ruins the inspired language of the poet came up in all its freshness and beauty. Though the

* It is recorded of Takir el Deen, a prince of some celebrity and a Druse, that after having travelled into Italy, where he had imbibed considerable taste for the arts, upon viewing Baälbec after his return, he shed tears at the recollection of the devastation he had himself caused to be committed upon those noble ruins. An expression of regret honorable no doubt to the feelings of the prince, but much less touching in its character than that of the Greek who saw the work of destruction at Athens: "When the last of the metopes was taken from the Parthenon," says Dr. Clarke, "and, in moving of it, great part of the superstructure with one of the triglyphs was thrown down by the workmen whom Lord Elgin employed, the Disdar who beheld the mischief done to the building, took his pipe from his mouth, dropped a tear, and in a supplicating tone of voice said to Lusieri, 'Spare! I was present.'"

Speaking of Lord Elgin and his accomplices, while employed in plundering the Parthenon, the author of "Childe Harold" says, "When they carry away three or four ship-loads of the most valuable and massy relics that time and barbarism have left to the most injured and most celebrated of cities; when they destroy, in a vain attempt to tear down these works which have been the admiration of ages, I know of no motive which can excuse, no name which can designate the perpetrators of this dastardly devastation." Every reader knows to whom the following severe lines apply:

" Be ever hailed with equal honor here
The Gothic monarch and the Pictish peer;
Arms gave the first his right, the last had none,
But basely stole what less barbarians won.
So when the lion quits his fell repast,
Next prowls the wolf, the filthy jackal last:
Flesh, limbs and blood, the former make their own,
The last poor brute securely gnaws the bone."

verses are familiar to all readers of good poetry, no apology is offered for introducing them in this place :

“ Beautiful !

I linger yet with Nature, for the night
 Hath been to me a more familiar face
 Than that of man ; and in her starry shade
 Of dim and solitary loveliness,
 I learned the language of another world.
 I do remember me, that in my youth,
 When I was wandering—upon such a night
 I stood within the Coliseum’s wall,*
 ‘Midst the chief relics of almighty Rome ;
 The trees which grew along the broken arches
 Waved dark in the blue midnight, and the stars
 Shone through the rents of ruin ; from afar
 The watch-dog bayed beyond the Tiber ; and

* The Coliseum at Rome was capable of holding ninety thousand spectators: it stood alone, casting its giant shadow in the midst of the capital. Since the abolition of the savage sports, the Amphitheatre has been appropriated to various uses. Mechanics at one time occupied it ; at another it was made a quarry for hewing out stones. About a century ago a petition was made for permission to let out the grass which grew in the arena. The Coliseum has supplied materials for the building of many of the modern edifices of the city.

“ From its mass
 Walls, palaces, half cities have been reared.”

Its remaining solid walls hardly show where they have been stripped of their galleries and archways of stone. It is now viewed as the principal surviving link between ancient and modern Rome. Time has done less than barbarian hands to despoil the walls of the Coliseum.

It was midnight : we stood within the arena, where the antagonist met in the death-grapple, upon the spot whose blood-stained sands drank the last life stream of the dying gladiator. Here men fought with men, and wild beasts with men or with each other. Here flowed the blood of human sacrifice, while the savage multitude with shouts beheld the work of death. Entering the lists, here the condemned criminal was allowed the uncertain prolongation of life by facing certain death to preserve it. Here eyes gloated on the pangs of expiring victims. The shout of the Roman million was heard along these deserted galleries. The echo of a step now disturbs the silence, and moonlight creeps through gaps which time has made.

This majestic relic, observes Hobhouse, had been protected as a barrack, a hospital, and a bazaar, and until a very late period it seems never to have been estimated in its true character, nor preserved as the noblest monument of imperial Rome.

More near from out the Cæsars' palace came
 The owl's long cry,* and, interruptedly,
 Of distant sentinels the fitful song
 Begun and died upon the gentle wind.
 Some cypresses beyond the time-worn breach
 Appeared to skirt the horizon, yet they stood
 Within a bowshot—where the Cæsars dwelt,
 And dwell the tuneless birds of night, amidst
 A grove which springs through levelled battlements,
 And twines its roots with the imperial hearths,
 Ivy usurps the laurel's place of growth ;
 But the gladiators' bloody Circus stands,
 A noble wreck in ruinous perfection !
 While Cæsar's chambers, and the Augustan halls,
 Grovel on earth in indistinct decay.
 And thou didst shine, thou rolling moon, upon
 All this, and cast a wide and tender light,
 Which softened down the hoar austerity
 Of rugged desolation, and filled up,
 As it were anew, the gaps of centuries ;
 Leaving that beautiful which still was so,
 And making that which was not, till the place
 Became religion, and the heart ran o'er
 With silent worship of the great of old—
 The dead, but sceptred sovereigns, who still rule
 Our spirits from their urns."

The ruins of the temple at Baalbec are supposed by some commentators to be the remains of the House of the Forest of Lebanon, built by Solomon, and described in the seventh chapter of the first book of Kings. "And his house where he dwelt had another court within the porch, which was of the like work. Solomon also made an house for Pharaoh's daughter, whom he had taken to wife, like unto this porch. And these things were of costly stones, (according to the measure of hewed stones, sawed with saws,) within and without, even from the foundation unto the coping, and so on the outside toward the great court. And the foundation was of costly stones, even great stones ; stones of ten cubits, and stones of

* A fact. Where the palace of the Cæsars stood the "owl's long cry" is heard, and the scorpion lies hid. We were warned of venomous reptiles as we cut a few shoots that now twine their roots along the "hearths of the Cæsars."

eight cubits. And above were costly stones (after the manner of hewed stones) and cedars. And the great court round about was with three rows of hewed stones, and a row of cedar beams, both for the inner court of the house of the Lord, and for the porch of the house."—1 Kings vii. 8—12.

We agree in the remark, that notwithstanding these measures fall short of the dimensions of the larger stones which form a portion of the temple at Baalbec, they would very well tally with those of the generality of the blocks of which the wall is composed.

The city built by Solomon called Baalath, mentioned in the eighth chapter of Chronicles, from its situation and the similarity of its name, has been identified with Baälbec. Josephus speaks of Baalath as one of the cities of pleasure erected by Solomon in Syria, and chosen for its fertility, fine fruits and temperature of climate.

Baälbec is now an impoverished and mean place, with a small population who subsist on the scanty produce of an uncultivated soil. Not a tenth part of the land is put to a profitable use; this will always be the case so long as the grinding oppressors enslave the people, and burthen them with taxation.

In the first century of the Christian era Baälbec was garrisoned by Roman soldiers. The temple of the Sun was converted into a church under the emperor Constantine; it fell rapidly into ruins after the Arabs overrun the country. Wars and earthquakes completed the destruction of the town; in this condition it now remains.

Inscriptions tell us about all we know of Baalbec; the rest is mere conjecture. It is the natural and common fate of cities, observes a fine writer, to have their memory preserved longer than their ruins. Troy, Babylon, and Memphis are known only from books, while there is not a foot of earth to point out their situation.—

"Dust long outlasts the storied stone;
But thou, thy very dust is gone."

Baälbec and Palmyra are in a great measure left to tell their own story.

LETTER XXX.

Turkish company of horse,—Evolutions of the cavalry,—Chivalrous display of armed Turks,—Albanian costume, mountaineers noted for their courage,—Dragoons quartered on the plains of Baälbec, inspected by the commander of the American squadron,—Sagacity of the Arabian horse,—Horses not common among the Hebrews till the time of Solomon,—Reckoned a grand present among the people of the East,—King of Israel forbade to keep many horses,—Illustrations from Scripture,—Horses employed as symbols figurative of the judgments and mercies of Heaven,—The Sun represented as riding in a chariot drawn by horses,—Sacrifices,—Repast at Baälbec,—French officer,—Accommodations for the night,—Route back to Bairout,—Loaded camels,—Eagerness of the people to obtain physic,—A dose of medicine the most acceptable donation,—Ludicrous incident at Constantinople,—Barbers the professors of the healing art,—Knowledge of the science of medicine extremely confined,—General remedies in cases of fever,—Phylacteries and frontlets,—Custom founded on a mistaken interpretation of Exodus,—Affectation of the Pharisees,—“Bridled asses,”—Sunset scene from the heights of Lebanon.

WHILE at Baälbec we witnessed the manœuvres of a Turkish company of horse which had encamped a short distance from the temple of the Sun. A French officer in the service of Ibrahim Pacha commanded the troops. From the lofty temple-walls we beheld the movements of the turbaned warriors, their bright sabres flashing in the sun. A body of armed Turks, mounted upon their fine Arabian horses, present a chivalrous display of men listed for the fight,—a picture worthy the pencil of a Scott.*

* The Turkish costume is highly picturesque ; less so, however, than the Albanian, which is considered more elegant than any worn in the Turkish empire.

“ The wild Albanian, kirtled to his knee,
With shawl-girt head and ornamented gun,
And gold-embroidered garments fair to see.”

In dress, figure, and manner of living, the Albanians have been compared to the highlanders of Scotland. The kilt, though white ; the spare, active form ; their dialect, and their hardy habits, all carried me back to Morven, says Byron. The mountaineers are noted for their fine cast of countenance, and for their noble stature ; their courage was never doubted.

While the commander of the American squadron was at Baälbec, he was invited by the officer in command to inspect his troops, then quartered on the plains. The whole force, consisting of about fifteen hundred dragoons, were brought out on the occasion, and went through the evolutions common to cavalry. Nothing could exceed the exactness and precision which they exhibited in their different manœuvres. The instantaneous manner in which the horse was brought upon his haunches at the word "halt," in charging upon a wall, convinced all present of the great sagacity of the Arabian horse. This noble animal, as found among the Turks, is noted for his gracefulness, swiftness, docility and strength.*

" Fierce are Albania's children, yet they lack
Not virtues, were those virtues more mature ;
Where is the foe that ever saw their back ?
Who can so well the toil of war endure ?"

The Albanian mountaineer occasionally mixes with the crowd ; you may know him by his ornamented cased knife, and belted pistols, with peaked silver-wrought handles.

* The horse was not common among the Hebrews till the time of Solomon, who, having married the daughter of Pharaoh, procured a fine breed of horses from Egypt. These, contrary to God's command, he began to multiply, and had four thousand stables, and forty thousand stalls, and twelve thousand horsemen.—1 Kings iv. 26. "And Solomon had four thousand stalls for horses and chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen whom he bestowed in the chariot cities, and with the king at Jerusalem."—2 Chron. ix. 25.

In ancient times, among the people of the East, horses were reckoned a grand present. The king of Israel was not allowed to keep many horses : "But he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses : forasmuch as the Lord hath said unto you, ye shall henceforth return no more that way."—Deut. xvii. 16. The judges and princes of Israel generally rode on mules and asses.

Horses are not unfrequently employed as symbols figurative of the judgments and mercies of heaven. In the Scriptures white horses denote the gospel ; red horses represent cruel and bloody wars ; pale horses denote famine ; black horses may represent fearful judgments and death ; and grizzled, speckled, or bay horses, mingled scenes of mercy and judgment.—Rev. vi. 2, 3 ; xix. 11—14.

The Sun, which was worshipped all over the East, was represented as riding in a chariot drawn by the most beautiful and swiftest horses in the

On our arrival at Baälbec we found some difficulty in obtaining refreshments of any kind. One of our guides, however, succeeded in procuring some dried fruits, and a quantity of hard-boiled eggs; to this was added, yet warm from the butcher's knife, the carcass of an animal, which being shorn of horn and hide, was plunged whole into a cauldron of hissing hot water. The grass for our table-cloth, we did justice to the dainty set before us. Knives and forks were dispensed with; such appendages were deemed unnecessary; fingers did the office of these instruments. Good humor and hard exercise had whet the edge of appetite, and the merry toast went round in bumpers of pure cold water. The French officer in command of the Turkish troops shortly after invited us to share in a feast of melons and different sorts of fruits, and to taste of his mountain wine, the pure juice of the grape. He treated us with every courtesy, and apologized for his meagre, coarse fare, which often carried him back to dear France, with a sigh for the spot he had left; but the regret was useless. We saw he was discontented, and anxiously waiting the opportunity to return to Marseilles, the place of his birth.

We had no little difficulty in procuring lodgings for the night; a straw mat and a place for shelter were not easily obtained. We found a domicile at last in shape of a dirty hovel, which served the double purpose of a stable and a bath-house, lighted by the dim gleam of a solitary lamp. Here we were fastened in for the remainder of the night by strong bolts; this was done to keep out the thieves and robbers which infested the neighborhood. To escape was impossible, however anxious we might be to fly from the annoyances that beset us on all quarters. We contrived to kill time by singing, telling stories, and consoling each other, cooped up as prisoners within

world, and performing every day his journey from east to west, to enlighten the world, and communicate warmth to mankind. The Persians sacrificed their horses to the Sun. It is thought that Josiah removed from the court of the temple, the horses or images of horses appointed for a similar purpose.—
2 Kings xxiii. 11. [*Calmet.*]

strong stone walls, and at the mercy of an Arab keeper, as ill a looking fellow as ever acted as gaoler to a condemned criminal.

At peep of dawn we were again mounted and on our way back to Bairout. We moved silently and slowly over the steeps and desert plains of the country, cheered by the songs of our Arab guides. On the road we encountered two or three trains of loaded camels, conveying on their backs whole families with their entire stock of furniture and cooking utensils.

On our arrival at Zahle we were beset with half the population of the place, some out of curiosity, some to get medicine, believing us to be doctors in the healing art. A late tourist travelling in this direction gives an amusing account of a fat, jolly looking dame, the picture of rude health, who insisted upon his feeling her pulse. It was in vain he declared himself to be no hakim,—physician; she would not be satisfied till he had yielded to her request, and by assuring her that she stood in no need of medical aid. A dose of medicine would have been the most acceptable of all presents.

Of the extreme eagerness of these people after physic, a ludicrous instance, related by the traveller just referred to, occurred at Constantinople. No person is allowed to practise there as hakim without a license from the government, for which, of course, they are obliged to pay highly. A man had set up as doctor without this diploma; the police were sent to apprehend him. Instead of seizing the culprit they allowed him quietly to slip away, while they made a rush at his phials and gallipots, and swallowed indiscriminately the whole contents of his physic shop. Luckily it consisted of simples only, and no harm was done.

The practitioners in physic among the Mahommedans are usually the barbers; in a country, of course, where every man's head is shaved, the professors of the healing art cannot fail to be numerous. Their knowledge of the science of medicine must necessarily be extremely confined. They perform a few surgical operations, says Doctor Hume, and are

acquainted with the virtues of mercury and some standard medicines. The general remedy in cases of fever and other kinds of illness is a saphie from a priest, which consists of some sentence from the Koran, written on a small piece of paper, and tied round the patient's neck. This, if the sick man recovers, he carefully preserves, by keeping it constantly between his skull caps, of which he generally wears two or three. Saphies are very commonly used by the Mahommedans, being considered to possess much efficacy for the body as well as the soul, and occupy the same place in the estimation of the superstitious as did the frontlets of the Jews and the phylacteries of the early Christians.*

In every bazaar shops are found in which are sold some of the most common drugs, such as opium, rhubarb and senna.†

We halted for the night on the soaring heights of Lebanon, just as the sun was setting in a sea of clouds far beneath our feet. The scene beyond seemed an ocean of rolling flame, stretching into measureless distance. The tops of the lesser hills were hid beneath masses of accumulated vapors, which faded in beauty and brightness as the light grew fainter in the west.

* Phylacteries were little rolls of parchment, in which were written certain words of the law, and were worn upon their foreheads and upon their left arm by the Jews. The custom, we are informed, was founded upon a mistaken interpretation of Exodus xiii. 9. "And it shall be for a sign unto thee upon thine hand, and for a memorial between thine eyes." And verse 16. "And it shall be for a token upon thine hand, and for frontlets between thine eyes." The almost general custom in the East of wearing phylacteries and frontlets, observes the editor of Calmet, determines nothing for the obligation or usefulness of the practice. Christ did not absolutely condemn them; but he condemned the abuse of them in the Pharisees,—their wearing them with affectation, and larger than other Jews. The Caraïte Jews, who adhere to the letter of the law and despise traditions, call the Rabbinical Jews "bridled asses," because they wear these tephilim and frontlets.

† Manners and Customs of the Egyptians.

LETTER XXXI.

Entertainment furnished on the route,—Unfermented wafer-cakes,—Common bread of the country,—Material used for fuel dried in the sun,—Manure of camels and other animals used in Arabia for fuel,—Substitute for wood in Persia, a country not wanting in minerals,—Lebanon, rich in mineral stores,—Ignorance and neglect of the Turkish government,—Directions given to the prophet Ezekiel misunderstood,—Acquaintance with the usages of the East, its advantages in explaining certain parts of Scripture, Voltaire, his notions refuted,—Common fuel of the country,—Value of wood in Persia, sold by weight,—Turf used in heating ovens,—Bread baked between two fires,—Oven among the Hebrews,—Tradition,—Ancient Hebrews, their several ways of baking bread,—Unleavened loaves of the children of Israel,—Illustration from Scripture,—Food of the Israelites beat in a mortar, and baked in pans,—Illustration from Scripture,—Unleavened cakes prepared by the women of Bulgaria,—Cakes offered by the Hebrews in the Temple,—Various opinions in reference to the directions given to Ezekiel,—God's commands to the prophet much misunderstood,—Ezekiel's place of residence at the period of his receiving the directions for preparing the bread.—Unjust comment of Voltaire,—Usual form of bread in Palestine,—Return to Bairout,—Scenery descending the heights of Lebanon,—Druses.

IN the hurry of leaving Bairout we had neglected to stock our provision basket; we were left, of course, to such entertainment as an Arab hut could furnish on the way. There are no half-way houses here, no hotels on the route, where for your money's worth, you can procure a comfortable meal. Dried fruits and hard-boiled eggs were the standing dish; large wafer-cakes, made of unfermented dough, constituted the sole article of bread.

The ancient custom of making bread is still preserved among the people of the East. It is a sort of unleavened paste which is usually baked under the ashes; sometimes upon a griddle, or cast into the oven. That which is to be eaten the same day is made thin, broad and flat. This wafer-cake, which is not unpleasant when fresh, is the common bread of the country.

As economy is necessary in a land nearly or quite destitute of fuel, the peasants of the present day, as was the custom recorded in the fourth chapter of Ezekiel, use the material there mentioned, which they knead into cakes, and place upon the walls and roofs of their huts; exposed to the heat of a scorching sun, they are soon dried, and afterwards serve for fuel.

In Arabia the manure of asses and camels is chiefly used for fuel, because these two species are most numerous and common. Niebuhr speaks of little girls who go about gathering this sort of fuel in the streets and upon the highways; they mix it with cut straw; and of this mixture make cakes which they place along the walls, or upon the declivity of some neighboring eminence, and dry them after the manner just mentioned.

Some villages in Persia do not yield a single tree, and the inhabitants are forced to burn this substitute for wood. Oxen, as a late traveller informs us, are as much bred there for yielding this sort of fuel as for their flesh. It is thought that better fuel might be found, as the country is not wanting in minerals; but the people are used to the material which they burn, and will not give themselves the trouble to dig for it.

Lebanon is also rich in minerals, but they have neither energy nor enterprise to sink a mine. A vein of coal had lately been found; but the discovery, as we are informed, was put to no profitable use;—for the same reason, doubtless, that caused the Druse to conceal the discovery of a mineral which produced both lead and silver. They made haste to destroy every vestige of it, as the whole district would have been ruined by attracting the attention of the Turks. How true is the remark, that the miserable condition of ignorance and neglect into which everything connected with industry has fallen, under the Turkish government, prevents us from obtaining any information in regard to the mineral stores of that country, “whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayst dig brass.”

An acquaintance with the ordinary usages of the East will materially assist us in properly understanding the passage, as found in the prophet Ezekiel. Any inquiry that tends to elucidate or give a fuller knowledge of the Scriptures we are assured must be interesting to the Christian reader.

Voltaire has asserted that the prophetic intimation to Ezekiel could not come from God, being incompatible with his majesty; that he never did reduce by his providence any poor mortals into such a state as recorded by the prophet; and never could do it. But those acquainted with the calamities of human life, it was observed in reply, will not be so positive as this lively Frenchman. To make the objection as strong as possible, by raising the disgust of the elegant part of the world to the greatest height, Voltaire, with his usual ingenuousness, supposes that the materials used for fuel were to be eaten with the bread prepared after this manner. With the same kind of liberty, he tells us, that these same materials are sometimes eaten through all desert Arabia, which, observes Mr. Harmer, is only true as explained to mean nothing more than that their bread is not unfrequently baked under the embers of the dung cakes used as fuel.

The use of such fuel is not confined to the poorest of the poor merely; it is used by the middling classes, and may be said to be the common fuel of the country, where wood is very dear, and is sold by weight. In Persia, according to Le Bruyn's estimate, they give you but twelve pounds of wood for fourpence or fivepence, and the same with regard to coals. Whence they are obliged to make use of turf composed of the manure of camels and other animals; or else, as Le Bruyn correctly remarks, the fire would cost more than the food; whereas they give but thirty pence for two hundred and twenty or two hundred and thirty pounds' weight of this turf. In Persia, as in Syria, this sort of fuel is more particularly used for heating ovens, in which they bake most of their meats, at small cost, and with little trouble. Bread is often baked between two fires made of this fuel; it burns slowly and bakes

very leisurely; if the bread be smoked or burnt, it retains the odor of the fuel used in baking it.

Speaking of the manners and customs of the Arabians, a French writer mentions a kind of oven among the Hebrews called *taanour*, which he compares to a large stone pitcher, open at top, in which they make a fire. When it is well heated, they mingle flour and water, and this paste they apply to the outside of the pitcher. It is baked in an instant, and being dried is taken off in thin pieces like our wafers. There is a tradition among the Orientals that Eve's oven was of this kind; that it was left to Noah; and that the boiling water which ran over it occasioned the deluge; metaphorical of the extensive spread and effects of her sin.

The ancient Hebrews had several ways of baking bread; they often baked it under the ashes, upon the hearth, upon round copper plates, or in pans or stoves made on purpose. At the departure of the children of Israel out of Egypt, they made some of these unleavened loaves for their journey: "And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they brought forth out of Egypt, for it was not leavened; because they were thrust out of Egypt, and could not tarry, neither had they prepared for themselves any victual." *—Exodus xii. 30.

The sort of cake here mentioned is said to be very common in Bulgaria. The women there, as soon as they see a guest coming, immediately prepare these unleavened loaves, which are baked under the ashes and sold to strangers, there being no bakers in the country.

The several sorts of cakes which the Hebrews offered in the temple were made of wheat or barley, sometimes mixed with oil, and sometimes with honey. At the consecration of

* The substance which God gave the children of Israel for food, after becoming sufficiently hard for the purpose, was beat in a mortar, made into paste, and baked in pans. "And the people went about, and gathered it, and ground it in mills, or beat it in a mortar, and baked it in pans, and made cakes of it: and the taste of it was as the taste of fresh oil."—Numb. xi. 8.

the high priest they offered unleavened bread or cakes tempered with oil; and wafers unleavened of wheaten flour anointed with oil.—Exodus xxix. 1, 2. It is hardly necessary to add, that oil, throughout all the countries of the East, answers the purpose of butter among other nations.

With reference to the directions given to the prophet, as recorded in the fourth chapter of Ezekiel, various opinions have been expressed. A learned commentator declares that the Lord's commands to the prophet have been much misunderstood, and that they have given occasion for many ill-judged and impertinent remarks.

It has been suggested whether the usages referred to in Ezekiel may not tend to determine in what country that prophet resided at the period of his receiving the directions for preparing the bread. In Mr. Taylor's opinion he did not live at Babylon, though involved in Babylonish captivity; and if he were carried to, and stationed on the confines of Persia, near Georgia, then possibly, in this very neighborhood, he received the command which has been so unjustly commented on by Voltaire; which appears so very unintelligible, or so very wretched to us; but which would excite no astonishment in the country where it was given. Perhaps Ezekiel, adds Mr. Taylor, or his fellow Jews, unaccustomed to this usage, were the only persons likely to be scandalized at it. Let this consideration have its due force.

The usual form given to bread in Palestine is that of the broad, thin, flat cake; this, as we have said, is to be eaten the same day, and when fresh, smells well and is palatable. That intended for longer keeping is mixed with leaven, and made thicker and larger, to preserve the moisture of the paste. The broad, thin dough cake was the sort of bread with which we were supplied in our different journeys through Palestine.

We resume our route for Bairout. The scenery, as we descended the heights of Lebanon, was magnificent. The highest elevation of the mountain is computed to be 9600 feet. We encountered on the way several Druses, a remarkable

people inhabiting the heights of Lebanon. A sketch of their manners, customs, and peculiar style of dress will be given in the ensuing letter.

LETTER XXXII.

Tenants of the heights of Lebanon,—Druses and Maronites,—Hakem, caliph of Egypt, styled invisible image of the Most High, regarded by the Druses with religious adoration, demolishes the holy monuments,—Inconsistency of Hakem, assassinated by the emissaries of his sister,—Restoration of the Holy Sepulchre,—Religious tenets of the Druses, imperfectly known,—The initiated and uninitiated,—Druslar, or household God,—Ramazan, or Turkish Lent,—Hobhouse,—Amusements of Turkey,—Childe Harold,—Druses, their outward profession of religion, tolerate no creed but their own, permit the union of brothers and sisters,—Divorces,—Profligacy,—Laws of hospitality held sacred by the Druse,—Charity and hospitality first duties enjoined by Mahomet,—Djezzar Pacha, implacable tyrant of the day,—Anecdote of the Turkish governor,—“Covenant of Salt,”—Illustrations from Scripture,—Salt, a symbol and pledge of hospitality,—Jacoub ben Laith, his regard for salt, the foundation of his after-fortune,—Druses the most wealthy and powerful people of Lebanon,—Mountain chiefs inured to danger and toil, formidable enemies in war, their appearance and dress,—Women of the Druses,—Singular appendage of the head,—Horn worn in the East, referred to in Scripture,—Abyssinian chiefs,—Tantour,—Emir’s wife,—The lady Druse,—Cumbersome machinery of the horn worn in some districts,—Loose garments worn by the ordinary Druse female,—Walking spectre.

THE only tribes considered as appropriate to Syria are the tenants of the heights of Lebanon. The most remarkable are the Druses and the Maronites, two races known to differ in religion and manners, though not unlike in their love of independence. The Druses, who are computed to be one hundred and twenty thousand in number, believe in one God who was manifested in the flesh over eight hundred years ago, and for the last time in the person of Hakem, caliph of Egypt.*

* Hakem was the third of the Fatamite Caliphs, whose insane vanity, flattered by the hope of introducing a new religion, led him to aspire

It is recorded of the Maronites, who are as numerous as the race of the Druses, that every year, on transfiguration day, they repair to the few ancient cedars yet standing on Lebanon, and there celebrate a mass on an altar of rough stones which they raise at the roots of the trees. The belief that this forest once supplied the timber for the building of Solomon's temple, has imparted a sacredness to the few left of these venerable trees, the last of the cedars of Lebanon.

The peculiar tenets of the Druses are but imperfectly known; their points of faith they keep a secret among themselves. A large portion of these people are said to be little acquainted with the religious opinions of their own sect; this portion comprehends the uninitiated, or those who are not fully instructed in the articles of their belief, whatever they may be. The writer to whom we are indebted for these facts, tells us, that after a certain probation, the initiated are admitted to their private assemblies, and become instructed in the mysteries. These form the other class, comprehending the Intelligents, or the Akkals, to whom are supposed to be revealed the hidden principles of the faith. The image of a calf is an object of their adoration. A late traveller, in

above the fame of a prophet. He styled himself the invisible image of the Most High, who, after nine apparitions on earth, was at length made manifest in his person. At the name of Hakem, the Lord of the living and the dead, every knee bent in religious adoration; his mysteries were performed on a mountain near Cairo; sixteen thousand converts had signed his profession of faith, and at the present hour, the Druses of Mount Lebanon are persuaded of the life and divinity of a madman and a tyrant. In his divine character, Hakem hated the Christians, as servants of him whom he considered his rival, and cruelly persecuted them. The Temple of the Christian world, the Church of the Resurrection, was by his command demolished to its foundation, and much profane labor was exhausted to destroy the cave in the rock, which properly constituted the Holy Sepulchre. Yet the calamities of Jerusalem were in some measure alleviated by the inconsistency or repentance of Hakem himself, and the royal mandate was sealed for the restitution of the church, when the tyrant was assassinated by the emissaries of his sister. A free toleration was again granted by the succeeding caliphs, and with the pious aid of the Emperor of Constantinople, the Holy Sepulchre arose from its ruins.—[Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, chap. lvii.]

a sojourn among the Druses, was shown the bronzed figure of a calf, which had been a Druslar or household god. It is said of these people, that they outwardly profess the religion of the strongest, and in Syria, conform to Mahometanism, attending the mosque, and keeping Ramazan, the Turkish Lent.* Notwithstanding this, they make no scruples in transgressing the laws of the prophet, whose religion they profess, as suits their interest or convenience. Like the followers of Mahomet, they tolerate no creed but their own; all other religions they hate. The Franks, natives of the western countries, are their peculiar aversion. The union of brothers and sisters is permitted. They intermarry among themselves, and have but one wife at a time, whom they divorce upon the slightest pretext. They are noted for their profligacy and perfidiousness; but hold sacred the laws of hospitality, which they have never been known to violate.† To partake of their food, to break bread and salt with them, ensures the safety of the guest, even though an enemy; his person from that time is sacred, and he is protected against the vengeance of consanguinity, for blood itself. Like the

* "We were a little unfortunate," observes Mr. Hobhouse, "for the time we chose for travelling, for it was during the Ramazan, or Turkish Lent, which fell this year in October, and was hailed at the rising of the new moon, on the evening of the 8th, by every demonstration of joy; but although, during this month, the strictest abstinence is observed in the day time, yet with the setting of the sun the feasting commences: this is the time of paying and receiving visits, and for the amusements of Turkey, puppet-shows, jugglers, dancers, and story-tellers."

"Just at this season Ramazani's fast
Through the long day its penance did maintain;
But when the lingering twilight hour was past,
Revel and feast assumed the rule again:
Now all was bustle, and the menial train
Prepared and spread the plenteous board within;
The vacant gallery now seemed made in vain,
But from the chambers came the mingled din,
As page and slave anon were passing out and in."

CHILDE HAROLD.

† "Three Weeks in Palestine."

Arab, who has eaten bread with strangers, they may trust his fidelity, and depend on his protection. Niebuhr says well when he advises the traveller to take an early opportunity of securing the friendship of his guide by a meal. Charity and hospitality are the first duties enjoined by Mahomet; and to say truth, as Byron remarks, very generally practised by his disciples. The first praise that can be bestowed on a chief, is a panegyric on his bounty; the next, on his valor.

The integrity of the Druse in maintaining faith with his guest, was often put to the proof at that period when that scourge of the nation, the ferocious Djezzar Pacha, was in power. He demanded that those who fled from him should be given up: he threatened and offered bribes in turn; but neither menaces nor bribes could move the Druse to violate the laws of hospitality or barter his pledge of faith. They who had fled to him for protection found it; they had shared his meal, and had slept upon his mat,—a warrant for their safety.

Baron du Tott relates the following anecdote of a governor of one of the Eastern provinces: "The Pacha," says the Baron, "was desirous of an acquaintance with me, and seeming to regret that his business would not permit him to stay long, he departed, promising in a short time to return. I had already attended him half-way down the staircase, when stopping, and turning briskly to one of my domestics who followed me, 'Bring me directly,' said he, 'some bread and salt.' I was not less surprised at this fancy," adds the narrator, "than at the haste which was made to obey him. What he requested was brought; when, taking a little salt between his fingers, and putting it with a mysterious air on a bit of bread, he ate it with a devout gravity; assuring me that I might now rely on him." This same man was afterwards tempted to violate his oath thus taken in favor of the Baron. The remark is true, that if the solemn contract be not always religiously observed, it serves at least to moderate the spirit of vengeance so natural to the Turks.

The "covenant of salt," mentioned in Chronicles, is sup-

posed to refer to an agreement made in which salt was used as a token of confirmation. "Ought ye not to know that the Lord God of Israel gave the kingdom over Israel to David forever, even to him and to his sons, by a covenant of salt?"—2 Chron. xiii. 5. Also, in Numbers:—"All the heave-offerings in the holy things which the children of Israel offer unto the Lord, have I given thee and thy sons, and thy daughters with thee, by a statute forever; it is a covenant of salt forever before the Lord unto thee, and to thy seed with thee."—Numb. xviii. 19.

A remarkable instance is related of the power of this covenant of salt over the mind, in the case of a freebooter or robber, who had broken into the palace of one of the Persian princes. Having collected a very large booty, which the robber was on the point of carrying away, he found his foot kicked something which made him stumble; he imagined it might be something of value, and putting it to his mouth, the better to distinguish what it was, his tongue soon informed him it was a lump of salt. Upon this, according to the morality, or rather superstition, of the country, where the people considered salt as a symbol and pledge of hospitality, he was so touched that he left all his booty, retiring without taking anything away with him. The next morning, the risk they had run of losing many valuable things being perceived, great was the surprise, and strict the inquiry, what could be the occasion of their being left. At length, Jacoub ben Laith,—the name of the robber,—was found to be the person concerned, who having given an account, very sincerely, of the whole transaction to the prince, he gained his esteem so effectually, that it might be said, with truth, that it was his regard for salt that laid the foundation of his after-fortune.*

* The Prince employing Jacoub in many enterprises, and finding him successful in all of them, he raised him, by little and little, to the chief posts among his troops; so that, at the prince's death, he found himself possessed of the command in chief, and had such interest in their affections, that they preferred his interests to those of the children of the deceased prince, and he

The Druses are considered to be the most wealthy and powerful people of Lebanon. Their chief is said to possess five times the revenue, and exercises greater authority than the nominal ruler of the mountain region, the Emir Beshir, who is unable to attempt anything without his concurrence and assistance.*

The mountain chiefs, who are usually attended by a retinue of followers, are a powerful race of men; their mode of life has inured them to danger and toil; in war they have ever proved a formidable enemy. While at the missionary's house at Lebanon, we were visited by one of these chiefs, a tall, well-formed man, handsomely dressed, with arms richly embossed with silver. Like the Turkish waywode, or governor of the province, he wore a turban of divers colored silk, composed of fold on fold of unmentionable dimensions.

We frequently met the women of the Druses on our route descending the mountains. The singular appendage worn on their heads is supposed to be alluded to in various passages of Scripture. This ornament of the female dress in certain parts of the East, is a hollow horn, about four or five inches in diameter at the root, and pointed at its extreme. This peculiarity reminded me very forcibly, says Mr. Buckingham, of the expression of the Psalmist: "Lift not up your horn on high; speak not with a stiff neck.—All the horns of the wicked also will I cut off; but the horns of the righteous shall be exalted."—Ps. lxxv. 5—10. The silver horns worn in Abyssinia by warriors and distinguished men are mentioned in Bruce's travels as affording similar illustrations. Colonel Light also speaks of the horns of the Abyssinian chiefs worn

became absolute master of that province; from whence, adds the writer of this notice, he afterwards spread his conquests far and wide.

* A son of Emir Beshir is reported to have lost his senses under the ill treatment he received at the hands of Djazzar Pasha, when formerly left as hostage at Acre. The appellation of Djazzar is synonymous with cutter or butcher, a name justly merited by that tyrant from the frightful catalogue of atrocities of which he was the author.

at victory celebrations. They are much shorter than those of the women, and fastened by a strong bandage, set firmly to the head.

This odd ornament, or tantour, so called, as worn by the female Druse, is about two feet in length, and shoots from the side of the head in shape of a conical tube. That made of tin or copper silvered over is worn by the more ordinary classes. The silver horn, studded with precious stones and otherwise ornamented, adorns the head of the lady Druse, whose importance is measured from the length of her top-piece.

The wife of an Emir wears a very rich head-dress in form of the horn, usually made of gold and adorned with jewels. Over this an embroidered drapery is thrown, which serves the purpose of a veil when the wearer chooses to conceal her features. The tantour is worn by the married women over the right side, the widow over the left side, the virgin on the crown of the head.

This horn is sometimes fixed upon a cushion fastened upon the head with such cumbrous machinery that it is not taken off for a month together. A sort of night-cap, as very aptly said, not remarkably convenient for any lady! In another district this appendage assumes another form, which has been very properly compared to two large wine-tunnels joined together, or the devil upon two sticks, in the game once so fashionable in England.

Among the ordinary class of females, a loose garment resembling a sheet, is thrown over the head, reaching to the feet. This long white-covering, which has two holes for the eyes, entirely conceals the figure, which, as it moves along, with the horn shooting up from beneath the drapery, resembles more a walking spectre than a living thing of flesh and blood.

LETTER XXXIII.

Excessive heat,—Mountain tops covered with snow, perpetual in the higher cavities of Lebanon,—Periodical winds continue to prevail till November; followed by the west and southwest winds, called by the Arabs the “fathers of rain,”—Heat along the level plains,—Height of Lebanon estimated from the appearance of snows upon the mountain tops,—Summits of Anti-Libanus,—Beauty and grandeur of the mountain of Lebanon,—Variety of temperature,—Advantages derived in the study of Scripture in obtaining correct accounts of the vicissitudes of the seasons in Palestine, proposed as a prize question, successful competitor,—Calendar showing the changes of the seasons that occur in Syria, details of the soil, climate and productions of that country,—Drought during the month of July,—End of October, the commencement of the rainy season,—Parched earth moistened by the dews,—Hermon,—Illustration from Scripture,—Waters collected from wells and reservoirs,—Persian wheel,—Earth in Palestine supplied with springs, rivulets, &c.,—Land of Canaan unlike that of Egypt,—Villages and cantons watered by the aid of machines,—Wheel turned by the motion of the feet, supposed to be alluded to in Deuteronomy,—Illustration from Scripture,—Vegetable riches of Syria,—Mulberry and the vine,—Lemons and watermelons of Jaffa,—Dates and pomegranates of Gaza,—Oranges of Tripoli,—Figs of Bairout,—Fruits of Damascus,—Grapes cultivated in the highest perfection,—Trees indigent to the soil of Palestine.

ON arriving at the lower grounds descending the heights of Lebanon, the heat was excessive; but the higher tops in some places were covered with snow;—a striking spectacle in such a climate, where the beholder, as Clarke says, seeking protection from a burning sun, almost considers the firmament to be on fire. In the higher cavities of Lebanon snow continues the year round, particularly in spots towards the north-east, which are protected from the sun’s rays, and the effect of the sea-wind.* This was observed to be the case as we

* In Palestine, as in all countries which approach the tropics, the winds are periodical, and governed in no small degree by the course of the sun. About the autumnal equinox the northwest wind begins to blow with frequency and strength. It renders the air dry, clear and sharp; and it is

were travelling through the valley of Baälbec. Upon the mountain heights the heavy snows of winter had gathered ; while beneath, along the level plains, we were nearly suffocated with heat, without screen or shelter

“ From off the drooping head to fend the ray
That downward poured intolerable day.”

The appearance of snow upon the mountain tops enables us to estimate with tolerable accuracy, the height of Lebanon ; since, as Volney remarks, it is well known that snow in this latitude, requires an elevation of fifteen or sixteen hundred fathoms, we may conclude that to be the height of Lebanon, and that it is consequently much lower than the Alps, or even the Pyrenees. The range of Anti-Libanus, whose summits are also covered with snow, is not so lofty as the opposite ridge ; the former, nevertheless, completely intercepts the view of the country eastward of it. Volney, therefore, as was observed on a former occasion, must have imagined the unlimited view which this mountain affords across the eastern deserts to the Euphrates. We agree with him when, speaking of the majestic mountains of Lebanon, he says, “ At every step we meet with scenes in which nature displays either beauty or grandeur, sometimes singularity, but always variety. When we land on the coast, the loftiness and steep ascent of this mountainous ridge, which seems to enclose the country, those gigantic masses which shoot into the clouds, inspire astonishment and awe.

Whilst at anchor off Tripoli, a town on the coast of Syria, we beheld the beauty and grandeur of the scene as described by Volney. Every variety of temperature is felt within the vicinities of Lebanon ;

remarkable that on the sea-coast it causes the headache, like the northeast wind in Egypt. We may further observe that it usually blows three days successively, like the south and southeast at the other equinox. It continues to prevail till November, that is, about fifty days, when it is followed by the west and southwest, called by the Arabs “ the fathers of rain.”—[*Natural History of Palestine*, p. 309.]

" Whose head in wintry grandeur towers,
And whitens with eternal sleet,
While Summer in a vale of flowers
Is sleeping rosy at his feet."

It is true of Lebanon, that Summer sleeps at his feet, while his head is whitened with eternal frost.* Thè resident at Tripoli, in the month of January, beholds under his windows the orange tree loaded with fruit, and the flower open its bud to the sun, while the hoary head of Lebanon is covered with ice and snow.

In this region the changes of the seasons may be experienced within the compass of a day's travel. If, as Volney says, we are in the neighboring mountains in the temperature of March; or, on the other hand, if chilled by the frosts of December; a day's journey brings us back to the coast, amid the flowers of May. Here the distance of a few hours carries the traveller through a succession of seasons, and allows him a choice of climate, varying from the mild temperature of France to the blood-heat of India or the pinching cold of Russia.†

The directors of the Royal College at Gottingen, being persuaded of the advantages to be derived in the study of Scripture in obtaining a correct account of the vicissitudes of summer and winter, seed-time and harvest in Palestine or Syria, proposed it as a prize question; to be selected from travellers of acknowledged authority. The successful competitor was Johan Buhle; and his work, says the editor of Calmet, communicates much valuable information. It was translated by Mr. Taylor and incorporated among the Fragments in the larger edition of Calmet. In the abridged copy of that work such portions of the fragments are inserted as were thought of most use to the general reader. This abstract forms a calendar, exhibiting, in regular course, the state of the

* The poets of Arabia have said that the Sannin bears Winter on his head, Spring on his shoulders, and Autumn in his bosom; while Summer lies sleeping at his feet.

† Volney's Travels.

weather, and the productions of each month in the year, showing at the same time the vicissitudes of the seasons as they occur in Syria or the land of Palestine. Those interested in the subject will there find accurate notices of the soil, climate and productions of the hill country of Judea, the land which Moses longed to make the residence of his people, and the once favored spot of all the earth.

We were on the coast of Syria in the months of July and August, and crossed the mountains of Lebanon in two different directions in the course of the season. The details of the weather and productions, as noted in the months referred to, are accurate; those of July are recorded as follows:—

JULY.

Weather. Heat more intense. There is no rain. Libanus is free from snow, except where the sun cannot penetrate. The snow on the tops of the mountains thawing gradually during the summer, Libanus yields a perpetual supply of water to the brooks and fountains in the countries below. The mercury usually stands in the beginning of the month at eighty degrees; towards the end eighty-five or eighty-six degrees. It does not rise in the afternoon above eight or ten. The winds generally blow from the west; but when they fail the heat is excessive.

Productions. Dates, apples, pears, nectarines, peaches, grapes, and the gourd called citrul, ripen. Cauliflower and water-parsnips are sown. There is no longer a sufficient supply of pasturage for the cattle.

It will be noticed that no rain falls during the month of July; the rainy season generally commences about the first of October, with some abatement of the extreme heat. During the drought of the hot season the parched earth is moistened by the dews which are very copious in Palestine. We were fully instructed by experience, says Maundrell, what the holy Psalmist means by the “dews of Hermon;” our tents

being wet with it as if it had rained all night. From May to August the dews may be said to fall in showers to moisten the soil. Generally speaking, the atmosphere is mild; the hot, sultry days are usually followed by intensely cold nights, a vicissitude frequently referred to in Scripture.

In some parts of Palestine the streams are dry during the heat of summer. While the rainy season lasts water is collected in wells or reservoirs, from which supplies are drawn to irrigate the lands. The water is drawn from the wells by means of the Persian wheel, or *noria*, a very simple contrivance for raising water, and the principal one used all over the Levant. An old history of the Island of Minorca furnishes the following description of this primitive and very useful machine :

Over the centre of the well is a wheel, of about five feet in diameter, vertically placed and sustained by an axis, which rests at both ends on the curb. Over this wheel is a loose band made of myrtle twigs, and reaching a foot or two below the surface of the water. A competent number of earthen pitchers, holding about three pints a-piece, are fastened to the band by the narrow neck, their mouths all turned the same way; a horizontal wheel is fixed near this, in such a manner that its pinions, or trundles, may fall in very exactly with the cogs or pins of the vertical one. The axis of this last rises to such a height, that a long pole, tenanted into it at the top, freely goes round, over the whole work without rubbing. At the outward, or smaller end of the pole, a cow or an ass is yoked, and gives motion to the engine. As the pitchers come to the top, they empty themselves into a stone trough, from whence the water is conveyed by a canal into a cistern, which stands high enough for the water to run freely to all parts of the garden.

The rains, plentiful dews, springs, rivulets, and brooks supply the earth in Palestine with sufficient moisture necessary for its fruitfulness. The land of Canaan is not like Egypt, which has no river but the Nile; and as it seldom rains in the

latter country, the lands which are not within reach of the inundation, continue parched and barren. To supply this want ditches are dug, and water is distributed throughout several villages and cantons, by the help of machines ; one of which is described as a wheel which a man turns with the motion of his feet, by ascending successively the several steps that are within it. But, as while he is continually thus turning, he cannot help himself up, he holds a stay in his hands which is not movable, and this supports him ; so that in this work, the hands do the office of the feet, and the feet that of the hands. This mode of irrigation is supposed to be alluded to in Deuteronomy, where it is said the land of Canaan is not like Egypt.* “ For the land, whither thou goest in to possess it, is not as the land of Egypt, from whence ye came out, where thou sowest thy seed, and waterest it with thy foot, as a garden of herbs.”—Deut. xi. 10.

Speaking of the fruits and plants of Palestine, Malte Brun remarks, that if the advantages of nature were duly seconded by the efforts of human skill, we might in the space of twenty leagues bring together in Syria the vegetable riches of the most distant countries. After mentioning the several objects of utility or pleasure peculiar to different localities, the white mulberry is added as forming the riches of the Druses, by the beautiful silks which are obtained from it ; and the vine raised on poles, or creeping along, furnishing red and white wines equal to those of Bordeaux.† To these may be added the lemons and watermelons of Jaffa, and the dates and pomegranates of Gaza, noticeable for their superior quality. The oranges of Tripoli may vie with those of Malta ; Bairout has figs like Marseilles,

* *Manners and Customs of the Egyptians.*

† The truth of this we had occasion more than once to notice. We have already referred to the superior quality of the Lebanon wine, mentioned by the prophet Hosea. The vine-dressers do not prop their vines, but let them trail on the ground ; neither do they dig round them, but till the earth with oxen, or with a heifer and an ass yoked in couples, the plants being set in straight lines, at proper distances.

and bananas like St. Domingo. Damascus possesses all the fruits of Europe, inasmuch as apples, plums and peaches grow with equal facility on her rocky soil.* In this catalogue of the products of the land of Palestine, Malte Brun barely mentions the grape, one of the most delicious fruits of the country, and cultivated in the highest perfection. Crossing Mount Lebanon we occasionally halted to feast on clusters of grapes, fresh pulled, which in quality and size were far superior to those gathered in the vineyards of France or Spain.

The valleys of Palestine still yield abundant crops of wheat, rice, barley and tobacco. Within a few years sugar-canes are said to have been introduced into the gardens of Bairout, and cultivated with success. The cedar, the pine, the cypress and the oak are enumerated among the indigenous productions of the country; to these are added the almond, the myrtle, the willow, the sycamore and locust trees. In all places where the olive is cultivated it yields plentifully, proving the fertility of even the most barren part of ancient Judea.

* Natural History of Palestine.

LETTER XXXIV.

Land of Canaan, extolled by sacred and profane writers, described by Moses as abounding in the riches of the earth,—Illustration from Scripture,—Ardor of Moses to behold the good land beyond Jordan, inferred from his animated description of that country, stimulated to behold these paradises from his curiosity as a man, and naturalist,—Hilly country of Judea supposed incapable of supplying food for the numerous Hebrews who passed the Jordan, that notion refuted,—Number of warriors conducted through the desert,—Syrian mode adopted in watering the soil, employed with success,—Sterility of the soil attributable to the barbarism of the present population,—Civil Government of the country,—Turkish Empire, precariously balanced,—Conflict between force and fraud, not always visible, but always operating,—Judges and kings exercising separate dominions at short distances from each other,—Affectation of independence everywhere exhibited in the holy land,—Power of imposition and extortion turned to personal advantage,—Justice and mercy sold to the highest bidder,—Rich pasturage,—Wild honey of the rock,—Oil from the flinty rock,—Illustration from Scripture,—Flowing honey of Arabia, alluded to in the book of Samuel,—Locust and wild honey, food of John the Baptist,—Fruit of the locust tree, supposed to be the same which supported the Forerunner of our Lord in the wilderness, used as an article of food, not unpalatable to the taste,—Honey from the valley of the Jordan,—The coming Messiah, “butter and honey shall he eat,”—Illustrations from Scripture,—Butter mentioned in Scripture usually understood to mean cream, or melted butter,—Churned butter not unknown in Judea,—Illustration from Scripture,—Mode of making butter in Curdistan,—Refreshment brought to David in the wilderness,—Honey and butter used to moderate thirst,—An Arab's breakfast,—Knowledge of the manners and customs of the East assists in rightly understanding the Scriptures.

PROFANE and sacred writers, from the earliest period, have extolled the land of Canaan as one of the finest countries in the world ; a country beautifully diversified with valley and hill, river and plain ; a good land, where, as Moses describes it, thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, and shalt not lack anything in it. “For the Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of waters, of fountains and depths that spring out of the valleys and hills ; a land of wheat and barley, and vines, and fig-trees, and pomegranates ; a land of

oil, and olives, and honey; a land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack anything in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass.”—Deut. viii. 7, 8, 9.

From this animated description we may imagine with what ardor Moses desired to behold the good land beyond Jordan, and the supreme gratification he would have known, had he been permitted to enter and possess it,—particularly, as he had been all his life habituated to a flat and arid desert, to a low and level country. The renown of these paradises, as well remarked, must have stimulated his curiosity as a man and a naturalist, independent of his wishes as a sovereign and legislator, for the welfare and the settlement of his people.

Some have supposed that a hilly country, destitute of great rivers, was incapable, under the most skilful management, of supplying food for the number of warriors whom Moses conducted through the desert, and who passed the river Jordan.* But competent judges, who have estimated the produce of a soil under the influence of a fertilizing sun, and well regulated irrigation, have declared to the contrary. It is remarked of the Syrians, that no people better understand the various modes adopted in watering the soil, or practise them with more success; that if vegetation languishes or becomes extinct, it may be ascribed to the state of vassalage in which the present population is held.†

* From the number of warriors which Moses conducted through the desert, it is estimated that the Hebrew people, when they crossed the Jordan, did not fall short of two millions; while, from facts recorded in the book of Samuel, we may conclude with greater confidence that the enrolment made under the direction of Joab must have returned a gross population of five millions and a half. “And Joab gave up the sum of the number of the people unto the king: and there were in Israel eight hundred thousand valiant men who drew the sword; and the men of Judah were five hundred thousand men.”—2 Sam. xxiv. 9.

† The author of the History of Palestine has cited from Jowett's Christian Researches in Syria, the following observations on the civil government of the country where the pachas are so frequently changed, or are so often at war with each other, and where the jurisdiction of the magistrates is so vari-

We before observed that the present aspect of Palestine presents sufficient evidence of the ancient fertility of the country, and of the accuracy of the old writers in extolling the fruitfulness of the holy land. The peasants of the present day, like those of the patriarchal ages, find rich and plentiful pasturage for their flocks ; while the aromatic plants yield the wild bees such an abundance of honey as to form an article of food among the poorer classes ; so that Canaan may still be characterized as a land flowing with milk and honey. On the return of the Israelites from Egypt it is described as a country very fertile, well peopled, an excellent province that bore all kinds of good fruit.

Moses declares that the Lord brought his people into a land whose rocks drop oil, and whose stones produce honey : “ He

ous and undefined that it is extremely difficult to discover any settled rule by which the administration is conducted. In the opinion of the writer just named, the whole Turkish empire has appearances of being so precariously balanced, that the slightest movement within or from without seems likely to overturn it. Everywhere is seen absolute power stretched beyond the limits of all apparent control, but finding, nevertheless, a counteracting principle in that extreme degree of acuteness to which the instinct of self-preservation is sharpened by the constant apprehension of injury. Hence springs that conflict between force and fraud, not always visible but always operating, which characterizes society in all despotic countries.

In the minute subdivision of power, which in all cases partakes of the arbitrary nature of the supreme government, the traveller is often reminded of patriarchal times, when there were found judges, and even kings, exercising a separate dominion at the distance of a short journey from one another. As an instance of this we are informed that on the road from Jerusalem to Sannour, by the way of Nablous, there are no fewer than three governors of cities, all of whom claim the honors of independent sovereigns ; for, although they acknowledge a nominal superiority in the Pacha of Damascus, they exclude his jurisdiction in all cases where he does not enforce his authority at the head of his troops. This affectation of independence is everywhere exhibited in the Holy Land, from the pachas of cities down to the sheiks of villages, who, aware of the uncertain tenure by which their masters remain in office, are disposed to treat their orders with contempt. Like them, too, they turn to their personal advantage the power of imposition and extortion which belongs to every one who is “dressed in a little brief authority ;” in this market justice and mercy are sold to the highest bidder.—[*Hist. of Palestine*, p. 300.]

made him ride on the high places of the earth, that he might eat the increase of the fields ; and he made him to suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock.”—Deut. xxxii. 13.

The honey here spoken of is carried by the caravans of Mecca to Grand Cairo, where it is used as a common article of food. Travellers tell us that the bee honey is often seen flowing in the woods of Arabia. This flowing honey is supposed to be the same as mentioned in the first book of Samuel, in connection with the story of Jonathan : “ But Jonathan heard not when his father charged the people with the oath ; wherefore he put forth the end of the rod that was in his hand and dipped it in an honey-comb, and put his hand to his mouth ; and his eyes were enlightened.”—1 Sam. xiv. 27.

The common wild honey was the food of John the Baptist, as recorded in Matthew : “ And the same John had his raiment of camel’s hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins : and his meat was locusts and wild honey.”—Matt. iii. 4.

The fruit of the locust, which some think to be the same, with the addition of the wild honey, which supported the Forerunner of our Lord in the wilderness, is contained in pods resembling those of the largest French beans, and have their seeds disposed in the same manner. These pods are used as an article of food while they continue ; they have a sweetish taste, and are not unpalatable.

Burckhardt speaks of a honey found in the valley of the Jordan, which he describes as a juice dropping from the leaves and twigs of a tree called gharrah, of the size of an olive tree, with leaves like those of a poplar, but somewhat broader. The honey collects upon the leaves like the dew, and is gathered from them, or from the ground under the tree, which is often found completely covered with it. It is very sweet when fresh, but turns sour after being kept for two days. The Arabs eat it with butter ; they also put it in gruel, and use it in rubbing their water-skins for the purpose of excluding the air. The prophet speaking of the coming Messiah says : “ Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good.”—Isa. vii. 15.

The milk-diet, cream, or fresh butter, mixed with honey, which was common in Palestine, constituted the food for children. In his predictions of Emanuel, Isaiah again says : "And it shall come to pass, for the abundance of milk that they shall give that he shall eat butter; for butter and honey shall every one eat that is left in the land."—Isa. vii. 22.

The butter mentioned in Scripture is usually understood to mean cream, or liquid butter. In this sense the passage in Job has been illustrated. "When I washed my steps (feet) with butter, and the rock poured me out rivers of oil."—Job xxix. 6.

A passage in Proverbs is quoted as evidence that churned butter was not unknown in Judea : "Surely the churning of milk bringeth forth butter."—Prov. xxx. 33. A late traveller, in his journey overland from India to England, says he saw it made in Curdistan in the following manner :—"The milk was put into a sort of bottle, made of goat's skin, every part of which was sewed up except the neck, which was tied with a string to prevent the milk from running out. They then fixed three strong sticks in the ground, in a form somewhat like that we often use in raising weights, only on a smaller scale. From these they suspend the goat-skin, tied by each end, and continue shaking it backwards and forwards till it becomes butter; and they easily know this by the noise it makes. They then empty the skin into a large vessel, and skim off the butter."*

Honey and butter, with other refreshments, were brought to David in the wilderness, as recorded in Samuel : "And honey, and butter, and sheep, and cheese of kine, for David, and for the people that were with him to eat: for they said that the people is hungry, and weary, and thirsty, in the wilderness."—2 Sam. xvii. 29.

Honey and butter with us would hardly be considered as adapted to moderate thirst; experience teaches us, however, as a French traveller remarks who tasted this food, that it is

* Jackson's "Journey overland from India to England."

no bad mixture, nor disagreeable in its taste ; it answers the purpose of drink also, and is used something in that shape at the breakfast of an Arab, whose chief meal is fresh butter, or cream mixed in a mess of honey. Such are the unvarying customs of the East ; a knowledge of which, as before remarked, . assists in understanding various passages in Scripture which otherwise might seem improbable or contradictory.

LETTER XXXV.

Study of the Scriptures promoted by lectures and travels relating to the countries of the East,—Purport of the Letters on Palestine,—Facts from personal observation,—The vine, accounted by the Jews the noblest of plants, a type of all that was excellent,—The people of Israel compared to a great vine planted by God,—Illustration from Scripture,—Poisonous qualities of the noxious vine referred to by Moses,—Wolf grapes of the Arabs,—The “true vine,”—Illustration from Scripture,—Richly ornamented vine which decorated the temple at Jerusalem, placed there by Herod, opulent and patriotic Jews added to its embellishment, its immense value, attention of the disciples abstracted by its splendor,—To go out and under the vine, a phrase denoting a fortunate and contented life,—Ample contributions of the Jews,—“Every man sitting under his own vine,” referring to a time of public tranquillity,—Illustrations from Scripture,—Vine stocks remarkable for size as for the quality of the fruit which they bore,—Mahommedan religion unfavorable to the cultivation of vineyards,—Grapes brought by spies to the camp of the Israelites,—Illustration from Scripture,—Eshcol, still noted for its excellent vineyards,—Surprise occasioned to the Israelites on witnessing a bunch of grapes borne between two upon a staff,—Valley of Hebron, chosen by Abraham as his residence,—Illustrations from Scripture,—Size of the vine stock found in Palestine,—Cluster of grapes, abundant supper for a whole family,—Amount of grape juice, or honey of raisins sent by Hebron to Egypt,—Triple produce gathered from the grape vine in Palestine,—Passage in Genesis indicating the abundance of vines which should fall to the lot of Jacob's issue,—Prophetic benediction concerning the sons of Jacob,—Illustration from Scripture,—Custom of turning cattle into vineyards,—The Ass bound to the vine without damage to the tree,—Practice of turning flocks and herds into vineyards, common where the vine is cultivated,—Animals permitted to browse on decayed vine leaves, referred to in the Mosaic law,—Fruit of the vine when permitted to be eaten,—Illustrations from Scripture,—Law permitting the stranger to enter the vineyard,—Ancient privilege of eating grapes at pleasure not extended to modern travellers,—Incident,—Provident regulations included in the law of Moses,—Wisdom and benevolence of the great Legislator,—Illustrations from Scripture.

WE observed, on a former occasion, that lectures and books of travel relating to the countries of the East, particularly those portions referred to in the present Letters, have led many to open their Bibles, and become instructed: should the perusal of these imperfect sketches lead to a similar result,

the labor of preparing them, as said before, will not have been in vain. We stated also, that the Letters on Palestine were not written for the edification of readers versed in the manners and customs of the East, or those who have made the Bible their study; but for those, and there are many, who seldom look into the word of God, or have but a limited knowledge of the sacred writings. To such these letters are particularly addressed, and to such no apology is offered for the frequent introduction of Scripture passages familiar to the Bible student.

Those conversant with books of Eastern travel, and the works of authors illustrating the Scriptures, will perceive the free use we have made of both. We avail ourselves of every information which we think will be of interest to the general reader. The learned commentator is consulted, whose expositions seem calculated to enlighten the inquiring mind, and the sensible traveller quoted, whose descriptions of the countries visited we know, from personal observation, to be correct. In describing certain interesting portions of the East, we may be permitted to repeat that we are speaking of places through which we have travelled, and the manners and customs of people whom we have seen.

From these preliminary remarks, which may remind the reader of the course which has been adopted in preparing these Letters, we return to the subject of the foregoing sketch, and speak of the vine, accounted by the Jews the most noble of plants, and considered as the type of all that was excellent, powerful, fruitful and fortunate. In scriptural language it is frequently employed in a figurative sense. The Jewish nation has been compared to a great vine planted and guarded by God: "Yet I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed; how then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto me?"—Jer. ii. 21. The degenerate plant here referred to by the prophet is common in Palestine; it is a noxious vine, distinguished from the true, or that from which wine is made, by its dangerous and pernicious quali-

ties. Some such sort of vine and its bitter clusters are supposed to have suggested to Moses the highly poetical imagery setting forth the future corruption of the Israelites.* In the opinion of some commentators, the wild grapes or noxious berries mentioned in Isaiah mean the hoary night-shade, or the wolf grape, as the Arabs call it, poisonous and offensive to the smell.

In opposition to the degenerate plant mentioned by the prophet, our Saviour declares himself to be the "true vine," between which and himself a significant analogy existed. "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman." †—John xv. 1.

* "For their vine is of the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah; their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter: their wine is the poison of dragons, and the cruel venom of asps."—Deut. xxxii. 32, 33.

† The expression, "I am the true vine," is supposed to have come from the lips of the Saviour on beholding the richly ornamented vine which decorated the temple at Jerusalem. A learned writer gives the following description of this curiously wrought and splendid ornament:—"In the temple of Jerusalem, above and around the gate seventy cubits high, which led from the porch to the holy place, a richly carved vine was extended as a border and decoration. The branches, tendrils and leaves were of the finest gold; the stalks of the bunches were of the length of the human form, and the bunches hanging upon them were of costly jewels. Herod first placed it there; rich and patriotic Jews from time to time added to its embellishment, one contributing a new grape, another a leaf, and a third even a bunch of the same precious materials. If to compute its value more than twelve millions of dollars be an exaggeration, it is nevertheless indisputable that this vine must have had an uncommon importance and sacred meaning in the eyes of the Jews. With what majestic splendor must it likewise have appeared in the evening, when illuminated by myriads of tapers! If, then, Jesus in the evening, after having celebrated the Passover, again betook himself to the temple with his disciples, what is more natural than, as they wandered in it to and fro, that above everything this vine blazing with gold and jewels should have attracted their attention? that, rivetted by the gorgeous magnificence of the sight, they were absorbed in wonder and contemplation respecting the real import of this work of art? Let us now conceive that Jesus at this moment, referring to this vine, said to his disciples, 'I am the true vine,' how correct and striking must his words then have appeared!—how clearly and determinately must then the import of them have been seen! To go out and enter under the vine was a phrase by which the patriotic Jews denoted a peaceful, fortunate and contented life. Hence this ornament,

One of the most beautiful allusions in Scripture is that representing "every man sitting under his own vine;" which is supposed to refer to the delightful Eastern arbors which were partly composed of vines. The vine, as mentioned by the inspired writer, was an arbor, forming, by its twining branches, a vast arch and extensive ceiling of verdure, like the vine stalks of the brook Eshcol, mentioned in Numbers. The period during which every man dwelt safely under his own vine and fig tree is supposed to refer to a time of public tranquillity, of profound peace: "And Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and under his fig tree, from Dan even to Beersheba, all the days of Solomon."—1 Kings iv. 25. "But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it."—Mic. iv. 4.

The bunches of grapes which the vine stocks commonly yield in Palestine were as remarkable for their size as for the quality of the fruit which they bore; and although the Mahomedan religion does not favor the cultivation of vineyards, the heavy clusters of grapes which are gathered in their season, at the present day, well correspond in size with those brought by the spies to the camp of the Israelites from the valley of Eshcol. "And they came unto the brook Eshcol, and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, and they bore it between two upon a staff; and they brought of the pomegranates and of the figs. The place was called the brook Eshcol, because of the cluster of grapes which the children of Israel cut down from thence."—Numb. xiii. 23, 24.

Eshcol is a very fertile valley in the south of Canaan, and is still noted for its excellent vineyards, which can be made to yield as heavy a cluster of grapes as that conveyed by the Hebrew spies as a specimen of the fruit of the land. The

extended over the entrance to the holy place, was as striking and full of meaning, as it was edifying to the orthodox Jews: hence, each contributed his own to increase its magnificence, and thus authenticate himself as a worthy member of this holy and glorious nation."

grapes of Egypt being particularly small, as very properly remarked, we may easily conceive of the surprise which was occasioned to the Israelites by witnessing a bunch of grapes of such size as to require to be borne between two upon a staff. A monk, who had lived many years in Palestine, told an English traveller that there were bunches of grapes in the valley of Hebron so large that two men could scarcely carry one.* The size of the vine stock, often found in Palestine, will give a good idea of the clusters of grapes which it yields. When Maundrell was in Galilee he saw vine stocks a foot and a half in diameter, forming, by their twining branches, vast arches and extensive ceilings of verdure; he adds with truth, that a cluster of grapes, two or three feet in length, will give an abundant supper to a whole family. Besides the large quantities of grapes and raisins which are daily sent to Jerusalem and other places, it has been estimated by an accurate traveller that Hebron alone, in the first half of the eighteenth century, annually sent three hundred camel loads, that is, nearly three hundred thousand weight of grape juice, or honey of raisins, to Egypt.

The amount yearly gathered from the grape vine in Palestine may be inferred from the fact, as mentioned by Bochart, that a triple produce from the same vine is gathered every year. In March, after the vine has produced the first clusters, they cut away from the fruit, that wood which is barren. In April, a new shoot, bearing fruit, springs from the branch that was left in March, which is also lopped; this shoots forth again in May, loaded with the latter grapes. Those clusters which blossom in March come to maturity and are fit to be

* The valley of Hebron, a short distance from the city of that name, or Mamre, as it was sometimes called, was very fertile, and for that reason is supposed to have been chosen by Abraham as his residence. "And Abraham removed his tent, and came and dwelt in the plain of Mamre, which is in Hebron, and built there an altar unto the Lord."—Gen. xiii. 18. Hebron, as already noticed, is understood in Scripture as the place where Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were buried, and also Sarah, Rebecca and Leah. Tradition points out the cave where it is said they were buried.

gathered in August ; those which blossom in April are gathered in September ; and those which blossom in May must be gathered in October.

We are referred to a passage in Genesis indicating the abundance of vines which should fall to the lot of Jacob's issue in the partition of the promised land. In his prophetic benediction concerning his sons, Jacob says of the tribe of Judah, that, unto him shall the gathering of the people be : " Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass' colt unto the choice vine ; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes."—Gen. xlix. 11.

In some parts of Persia, where it is customary to turn cattle into vineyards, after the vintage, to browse on the leaves, the vine stocks grow to such a size that a man can hardly compass them in his arms. These facts have been referred to as evidence that the ass, according to the prediction of Jacob, might be securely bound to the vine, and without damaging the tree by browsing on its leaves and branches. The practice, however, of turning flocks and herds into vineyards after vintage season, is common in most countries where the vine is cultivated to any extent.

In some parts of Europe, as well as Asia Minor, sheep, goats, and other animals are permitted to browse on decayed vine-leaves, a custom referred to in the laws of Moses, where a man was prohibited introducing his beast into the vineyard of his neighbor. In planting the vine, the same laws also required that the fruits of the fourth year should be holy, to praise the Lord withal, and that it should not be eaten before the fifth year. " But in the fourth year all the fruit thereof shall be holy, to praise the Lord withal ; and in the fifth year shall ye eat of the fruit thereof, that it may yield unto you the increase thereof: I am the Lord your God."—Lev. xix. 24, 25.

The same laws permitted the stranger to enter the vineyard on the way, and eat grapes at his pleasure, but he was not allowed to put any in his vessel. " When thou comest into

thy neighbor's vineyard, then thou mayest eat grapes thy fill at thine own pleasure ; but thou shalt not put any in thy vessel."—Deut. xxiii. 24.

This privilege of eating grapes at pleasure has hardly been extended to travellers of the present day, as our observation can attest. Passing an extensive vineyard on our way to Damascus, one of our party was tempted to step aside and gather a rich cluster of grapes that hung ripening in the sun. A yell and a shower of stones soon made known to him that he was treading on forbidden ground.

Among the provident regulations included in the laws of Moses, was that of not gathering the grapes of the seventh year ; the fruit was left for the poor, the orphan, and the stranger ; a regulation in which may be discerned the wisdom as well as benevolence of the great Legislator. " When thou gatherest the grapes of the vineyard, thou shalt not glean it afterwards : it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow."—Deut. xxiv. 21.

LETTER XXXVI.

Scriptural account of the cultivation of the vine, the vintage, and the wines of Palestine,—Vineyards planted by the Jews,—Hebrew shekel of silver, Labor of the vine-dressers and the keepers reckoned a base task,—Illustrations from Scripture,—The wheat harvest and the threshing followed the vintage,—Illustrations from Scripture,—Clusters of grapes gathered with a sickle, referred to in Jeremiah,—Fruit carried into the wine-press, mentioned in Revelation,—Vintage, a season of mirth,—Harvest-home in Palestine,—Tributes and songs,—Thanksgiving festivals,—Wines of Canaan mixed with water for common use, scented with frankincense, myrrh, &c.,—Illustrations from Scripture,—Wines made of the juice of pomegranates, mentioned in Proverbs and the Canticles,—Wine best when old, referred to by the prophet Isaiah,—Sweet wines made from grapes fully ripe,—Common drink of the Israelites in the harvest-field,—Baths furnished by Solomon to Hiram,—Vessels in which wines were kept still used in the East,—Goat-skin bottles of the Arabs, sewed and pitched together,—Joshua and the Gibeonites,—Illustration from Scripture,—New wines in old bottles,—“Bottle in the smoke,” unfit for service,—Abigail’s present to David,—Bottles made by the potters,—Vessels called barrels, mentioned in Kings,—Water-jugs and jars of stone,—Difference between the properties of glass bottles and those made of skin, necessity of distinguishing one kind from the other,—Propriety of putting new wine into new bottles,—Ox-skin, or girba, mentioned by Bruce.

THE editor of Calmet has transferred to the pages of his work a scriptural account of the cultivation of the vine, the vintage, and the wines of Palestine ; and as it gives a definite description of the manner of planting vineyards, of gathering the grapes, and of the different wines of Canaan, we shall introduce it, with a few variations, as connected with the subject of the preceding letter.

The Jews, it appears, planted their vineyards most commonly on the south side of a hill or mountain, the stones being gathered out, and the space hedged round with thorns or walled in. A good vineyard consisted of a thousand vines, and produced a rent of a thousand silverlings, or shekels of silver,*

* The Hebrew shekel of silver was worth two shillings three pence one farthing and a half English.

“And it shall come to pass in that day, that every place shall be, where there were a thousand vines at a thousand silverlings, it shall even be for briers and thorns.”—Isa. vii. 23. According to the Song of Songs, it required two hundred more to pay the keepers.—Cant. viii. 11, 12.

In these the vine-dressers and the keepers labored, digging, planting, pruning, and propping the vines, gathering the grapes, and making wine.

As we learn from the book of Kings, this was a laborious task, and was often reckoned a base one, as referred to in the book of Canticles. “But the captain of the guard left of the poor of the land to be vine-dressers and husbandmen.”—2 Kings xxv. 12. “Look not upon me because I am black, because the sun hath looked upon me : my mother’s children were angry with me ; they made me the keeper of the vineyards ; but mine own vineyard have I not kept.”—Cant. i. 6.

The vines with the tender grapes gave a good smell early in the spring, “afore the harvest ;”—that is, the barley harvest, when the bud is perfect, and the sour grape is ripening in the flower. “For afore the harvest, when the bud is perfect, and the sour grape is ripening in the flower, he shall both cut off the sprigs with pruning-hooks, and take away and cut down the branches.”—Isa. xviii. 5.

The vintage followed the wheat harvest and the threshing, about June or July, as mentioned in Leviticus and the prophet Amos. “And your threshing shall reach unto the vintage, and the vintage shall reach unto the sowing time ; and ye shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land safely.”—Lev. xxvi. 5. “Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that the ploughman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth the seed ; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and the hills shall melt.”—Amos ix. 13.

The clusters of grapes were gathered with a sickle and put in baskets, referred to in Jeremiah : “Thus saith the Lord of hosts, They shall thoroughly glean the remnant of Israel as a

vine ; turn back thy hand as a grape-gatherer into the baskets.”—Jer. vi. 9.

The fruit was now carried and thrown into the wine-vat, or wine-press, where it was probably first trodden by men, and then pressed. In Revelation we read—“ And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire ; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth ; for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great wine-press of the wrath of God. And the wine-press was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the wine-press, even unto the horse-bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.”—Rev. xiv. 18, 19, 20.

It is mentioned as a mark of the great work and power of the Messiah, that he had trodden the wine-press alone ; and of the people there was none with him ;—referred to in the book just quoted, and by the prophet Isaiah : “ I have trodden the wine-press alone : and of the people there was none with me ; for I will tread them in my anger, and trample them in my fury ; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment.”—Isa. lxiii. 3. “ And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations : and he shall rule them with a rod of iron ; and he treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.”—Rev. xix. 15.

The vintage was a season of great mirth. The month of May witnessed the harvest home of all Palestine in the days of Moses, as well as in the present times ; and no sooner was the pleasant toil of filling their barns completed, than all the males repaired to the holy city with the appointed tribute in their hands, and the song of praise in their mouths. The termination of the vintage was marked with a similar expression of thanksgiving uttered by the assembled tribes in the place which had received the name of Jehovah. This festi-

val was of the most lively and animated description, celebrated with a joyous heart, and under the canopy of heaven, in a most delightful season of the year. If more grateful dances accompanied the gathering in of the grapes on the banks of the Cephisus, the tabret, the viol, and the harp which sounded around the walls of the sacred metropolis were not wanting in sweetness and gaiety ; and instead of the frantic riot of satyrs and bacchanals, the rejoicing was chastened by the solemn religious recollections with which it was associated, in a manner remarkably pleasing and picturesque.*

The writer who refers to the Scripture authorities before cited, now speaks of the wines of Canaan, which being very heady, were generally mixed with water for common use, as among the Italians ; and sometimes scented with frankincense, myrrh, calamus, and other spices, as mentioned in Proverbs and the Song of Solomon : “ She hath killed her beasts ; she hath mingled her wine ; she hath also furnished her tables : Come eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled.”—Prov. ix. 2, 5.

They also scented their wines with pomegranates, or made wine of their juice, as we do of the juice of currants, gooseberries, &c., fermented with sugar. “ I would lead thee, and bring thee unto my mother’s house, who would instruct me : I would cause thee to drink of spiced wine of the juice of my pomegranate.”—Cant. viii. 2.

Wine is best when old, and on the lees well refined, the dregs having sunk to the bottom, as mentioned by Isaiah in the feast of fat things, in the feast of wines : “ And in this mountain shall the Lord of Hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined.”—Isa. xxv. 6.

Sweet wine is that which is made from the grapes fully ripe. The Israelites had two kinds of vinegar ; the one was a weak wine which was used for their common drink in the

* Literature and Religion of the Ancient Hebrews.

harvest field, (Ruth ii. 14,) as the Spaniards and Italians still do ; and it was probably of this that Solomon was to furnish twenty thousand baths to Hiram for his servants, the hewers that cut timber in Lebanon. “ And behold I will give to thy servants, the hewers that cut timber, twenty thousand measures of beaten wheat, and twenty thousand measures of barley, and twenty thousand baths of wine, and twenty thousand baths of oil.”—2 Chron. ii. 10.

The vessels or leathern bottles in which the wines were kept are often referred to in Scripture. They are still known in the East, and were used by us in our various routes through Palestine for carrying water, which soon became impregnated with the disagreeable flavor of the skin. These bottles, or goat-skins, as Bruce notices, are firmly sewed and pitched together. The Arabs pull the skin off goats in the same manner we do from rabbits, and sew up the places where the legs and tail were cut off, leaving one for the neck of the bottle to pour from, and in such bags they put up and carry not only their liquors, but dry things which are apt to be broken ; by which means they are well preserved from wet, dust or insects. These would in time crack and wear out. Hence, when the Gibeonites came to Joshua, pretending they came from a far country, amongst other things they brought wine bottles, old and rent, and bound up where they had leaked :—“ They did work wilily, and went and made as if they had been ambassadors ; and took old sacks upon their asses, and wine bottles, old, and rent, and bound up.” “ And these bottles of wine which we filled were new ; and, behold, they be rent ; and these our garments and our shoes are become old, by reason of the very long journey.”—Josh. ix. 4, 13.

Thus, too, it was not expedient to put new wine into old bottles, because the fermentation of it would break or crack the bottles : “ Neither do men put new wine into old bottles ; else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish ; but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved.”—Matt. ix. 17.

And thus David complains that he had become like a bottle in the smoke; that is, a bottle dried and cracked and worn out and unfit for service. "For I am become like a bottle in the smoke; yet do I not forget thy statutes."—Ps. cxix. 83.

These bottles were probably of various sizes, and sometimes very large; for when Abigail went to meet David and his four hundred men, and took a present to pacify and supply him, two hundred loaves, and five sheep ready dressed, &c., she took only two bottles of wine; a very disproportionate quantity, unless the bottles were large. "Then Abigail made haste, and took two hundred loaves, and two bottles of wine, and five sheep ready dressed, and five measures of parched corn, and a hundred clusters of raisins, and two hundred cakes of figs, and laid them on asses."—1 Sam. xxv. 18.

But the Israelites had bottles likewise made by the potters, referred to in the thirtieth chapter of Isaiah, fourteenth verse. We hear also of vessels called barrels. That of the widow, in which her meal was held was not probably very large, (1 Kings xvii. 12, 14.)

Those four in which the water was brought up from the sea, at the bottom of Mount Carmel, to pour upon Elijah's sacrifice, must have been large, as mentioned in Kings: "And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces and laid him on the wood, and said, Fill four barrels of water, and pour it on the sacrifice, and on the wood."—1 Kings xviii. 33.

In the scriptural account of the cultivation of the vine, &c., of Palestine, the writer concludes with referring to a passage in John, where we read of the water jugs or jars of stone, of considerable size, into which our Lord caused the water to be converted into wine: "And there were set there six water-pots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece."—John ii. 6.

Speaking of the difference between the properties of glass

bottles, such as are in common use among us, and bottles made of skin which were anciently used and still are used in the East, it has been very properly remarked, that, when we read of bottles without carefully distinguishing in our minds one kind of bottle from the other, mistake is sure to ensue. For instance, the Gibeonites "took upon their asses, wine-bottles old, and rent, and bound up." "Neither do men," says Matthew, "put new wine into old bottles;"—"new wine must be put into new bottles, and both are preserved," as in Luke. Now what idea, it was very naturally asked, have English readers of old, and rent, and patched [glass] bottles? Or, of the necessity of new glass bottles for holding new wine? Liquor poured into a skin bottle causes it to swell and distend, especially during the process of fermentation; in this state, if no vent be given, the liquor may overpower the strength of the bottle. Hence, as correctly observed, arises the propriety of putting new wine into new bottles, which being in the prime of their strength, may resist the expansion, the internal pressure of their contents, and preserve the wine to maturity; while old bottles may, without danger, contain old wine, whose fermentation is already past.

Bottles were made of kid-skins, goat-skins, and ox-skins, and of course were proportioned to the size of the animal which yielded them. The two bottles of wine which Abigail sent to David are supposed to have been those of ox-skin, or the girba, mentioned by Bruce, containing about sixty gallons each, and two of them are the load of the camel.

LETTER XXXVII.

Return to Beirout,—Turkish ablutions, strictly adhered to by the Mahom medans,—Island of Cyprus,—Limersol and Lanarca,—Nicosia,—Annual income of the governor,—Labors of industry taxed to feed the luxuries of the rich,—Inhabitants oppressed by the rapacious governor of the island,—Excessive heat,—Fruits and wines of the country,—Flowers,—Superstition of the natives,—Population,—Habits and customs of the Turks at variance with European usages,—Women of Cyprus,—Paul and Barnabas preach at Salamis,—Illustrations from Scripture,—Return to Jaffa,—Prince of the Druses,—Lady Hester Stanhope, her partiality for the Americans, her reception of a party from the ship, stories current of this extraordinary woman not true,—Return to Tyre and Sidon,—Paul permitted to touch at Sidon,—Favorable report of Julius, by which the imprisonment of the Apostle was greatly moderated,—Governor and Pasha of the province visit the ship,—Journey to Damascus,—Hills composed of calcareous rock,—Caverns of rock used as dwelling places and places of refuge,—Illustrations from Scripture,—Rocks in the East still resorted to as strongholds, capable of sustaining a siege,—Skirmishes and combats fought in the grottoes or caverns of Egypt against the invaders under Napoleon,—Houses built with basalt,—Caverns east of the Jordan made in the rocks,—Dwellings of bare rock and mason work,—Labor in the construction of caverns,—Door of entrance,—Country formerly inhabited by Troglodytes,—Caves sufficiently spacious to contain families and all their cattle,—National power, &c., inferred from the character of the discovered antiquities in the East,—Allusions and historical facts of Scripture supported by existing evidences,—Antiquities and remains of Arabia Petræa.

THE reader will now follow us to Beirout; here we again enjoyed the refreshing process of a Turkish bath, whose magic properties restore to the fatigued limbs their wonted activity, and you feel like one sprung to new life. We before noticed the luxury of the Turkish bath, made doubly grateful in a climate where, as truly said, the traveller, seeking protection from a burning sun, almost considers the firmament to be on fire. How changed the scene, as we entered the cool and spacious area—

“A marble-paved pavilion, where a spring
Of living waters from the centre rose,
Whose bubbling doth a genial freshness fling,
And soft voluptuous couches breathed repose.”

The remark is true, that whatever else the Turk may neglect, and others consider as essentials, the custom of ablution with him is strictly adhered to ; he makes it a part of his diet, as well as religion.

Leaving Beirut, after a passage of five days, we stood in view of Cyprus, famous in the times of the Greeks and Romans for the heathen abominations of Cyprian worship.*

* We touched at Limersol and Lanarca, two considerable towns of the island, and anchored at the latter place, from which a small party set out for Nicosia, the residence of the governor, and the capital of the island. Here a sumptuous entertainment was provided at the spacious convent of the Grecian archbishop, who received the guests with every mark of courtesy and attention.

The annual income of the governor of Cyprus is computed at ten million piastres ; a tenth part of this yearly extortion is paid to the master who employs him. We again ask, what encouragement has the poor man to labor, whose wages of industry are taxed to feed the luxuries of the rich ? How can a government and a people become united, when the one is crushed and yoked like beasts, to satisfy the rapacity of the other ? Wherever tribute can be drawn, or money extorted, the Turkish masters exact to the uttermost farthing. The governor of Cyprus repairs every year to Lanarca, to receive the complimentary presents,—the fines, in other words,—from the resident consuls at that place. If a Turkish ship of war be in the harbor, no merchant vessel can leave it without the captain's consent ; those who ask permission to depart must always back their application by a few sequins. The inhabitants are cruelly oppressed ; the different towns are fast decreasing in population by the departure of the people for other places.

The heat through the island is excessive, and fevers, in the summer months, are prevalent ; other causes, also, operate to produce disease, and to render Cyprus an unhealthy place of residence. The valleys are extremely fertile, and although the lands lie mostly uncultivated, the richest fruits are had in abundance. The grapes are very luscious. The wines made from them have been extravagantly extolled ; they are said to restore health and youth to the most exhausted frames. It takes forty years, they tell us, to ripen to perfection, this "balsam of life."

Flowers of every odor and hue are scattered over the island : the hyacinth, the ranunculus, the anemone, and single and double narcissus, are particularly noticed as the spontaneous growth of the soil ;—these mostly thrive in the hilly lands, and far around fill the air with delicious fragrance.

It is said of the natives that they never eat the flesh of oxen, cows, or calves, nor drink cow's milk. The superstition which keeps them from slaying these animals for food, does not prevent the cultivation of the breed for exportation, and other uses.

From Cyprus we proceeded to Jaffa, to receive a party on return from an excursion through the interior of the country. In the remotest deserts, amongst the wildest tribes, the American flag was displayed from the tent of the travellers. In this excursion they had visited the Emir Beschir, prince of the Druses, and Lady Hester Stanhope, of eccentric memory. Lady Hester was partial to the Americans, and has been known to receive them as visitors, when those of her own countrymen have been denied the privilege of an introduction. We had an opportunity of seeing this extraordinary lady, who resided some two leagues distant from our place of landing; but as

When the Turks conquered the island, its population was rated at a million. It is now estimated to contain less than a twentieth part of that number; and the country, once celebrated for its beauty, as the abode of luxurious pleasures, is now a comparative desert, groaning beneath the rod of the oppressor.

It is admitted that the Turks, as yet, have done nothing for science; having no taste for the ornamental arts, they have attained to no excellence in the useful ones. Their habits and customs have kept them stationary for centuries; they adhere to certain practices because at variance with European usages. Among the Mahommedans, the Christian notices customs entirely differing with those of his own country. He will remark, as Dr. Madden says, that the beard is worn, and the hair shaven; that the men wear petticoats and turbans, and the women trousers. Fingers supply the place of forks, and a cushion that of a chair. It is the same of their morals and religion, which differ no less in all essential points with the practice and belief of the Christian.

The women of Cyprus were once celebrated for their beauty. Dr. Clarke thought he could trace, in the faces of the present race, that elevated cast so much admired in the works of Grecian artists. This was a fanciful discovery on the part of the learned doctor. We hardly saw a comely set of features; with the exception of large dark eyes, there was nothing observable in the sallow faces of the women of Cyprus.

When Christianity was first promulgated here, there were several temples dedicated to Venus. Paul and Barnabas preached at Salamis to abolish the abominations of the Cyprian worship.—“So they being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus. And when they were at Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews; and they had also John to their minister. And when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Barjesus.”—Acts xiii. 4, 5, 6.

The licentious manners of the females of the island were once notorious. The remark is not true of modern Cyprus. It is no longer famous for the beauty, nor infamous for the immodesty of its women.

our time was limited, we preferred to improve it in examining a few of the buried ruins of the city, its ancient pillars, and fragments of mosaic pavement. Our party was received with marked attention by Lady Hester, who, on being apprised of their arrival, ordered refreshments, &c., to be spread, honoring the occasion with her presence, no ordinary compliment to the guests. She wore a turban of rich green silk, and was arrayed in the costume of the Emir or Shereef, a Mahomedan noble claiming descent from the prophet. She smoked the chibouque, or Turkish pipe : after a few ambrosial whiffs she rose to retire, requesting her guests, at the same time, to act their good pleasure in all things, and to consider themselves at home beneath her roof. Thus ended the interview with Lady Hester Stanhope. Dr. Merryon, who was her physician, and who we believe attended her in her last illness, states with truth, that many of the stories current in England of this extraordinary woman were untrue ; and that several travellers had written accounts of a sojourn at her residence at Mar Elias, and of long interviews with her, who, to his certain knowledge, had never seen her, if even they had ever been under her roof.

A short sail carried us to Tyre once more ; passing rapidly on, a few hours brought us to Sidon, or Saide, as it is now called.

Paul on his voyage to Rome was permitted to touch at Sidon, where he found a Christian church was already established. Julius, to whom Festus committed Paul to be conveyed to Rome, had a great regard for the apostle, and suffered him to land at Sidon, to visit his friends there, and to refresh himself.* “ And when it was determined that we should sail into Italy, they delivered Paul and certain other

* In a subsequent part of the voyage Julius opposed the violence of the soldiers directed against the prisoners generally, in order to save the apostle. When he delivered his charge to the custody of the chief captain of the guard, the favorable report of Julius, no doubt, essentially contributed to the indulgences which Paul afterwards met with, and by which his imprisonment was greatly moderated.

prisoners unto one named Julius, a centurion of Augustus band. And the next day we touched at Sidon; and Julius courteously entreated Paul, and gave him liberty to go unto his friends and to refresh himself.”—Acts xxviii. 1—3.

During our short stay at Sidon we were visited by the governor, the pasha of the Province, and other Turkish dignitaries: But we hurry to Beirout, our starting point on a visit to Damascus. Furnished with mules, donkeys, and guides, we pushed forward and again crossed the mountains of Lebanon for that ancient city. Many of the hills in this part of the country are composed of a hard calcareous rock; like all limestone strata, they present, as Dr. Clarke observes, a great number of caverns, to which, as places of retreat, frequent allusion is made in the books of Samuel and of Kings. We passed one near Damascus, which is said to be capable of containing four thousand men; it must have been in a similar recess that David and his men encountered the ill-fated Saul when pursued by him on the hills of the wild goats.

The mountains of Palestine contain numerous caverns of rock which were used as dwelling places for whole families, including their cattle and flocks. Many of the caves in some parts of Judea are still occupied by the inhabitants as places of retreat. In times of danger the ancient people of Judea fled to these rocks for refuge; as recorded in Judges, of the Benjamites, who, being nearly exterminated by the other tribes, found security in the rock Rimmon, and abode there four months: “But six hundred men turned and fled to the wilderness unto the rock Rimmon, and abode in the rock Rimmon four months.”—Judges xx. 47.

When pursued by the Midianites, the children of Israel fled to the rocky caves and strongholds of the mountains: “And the hand of Midian prevailed against Israel: and because of the Midianites the children of Israel made them the dens which are in the mountains, and caves, and strongholds.”—Judges vi. 2.

Rocks in the East are still resorted to as strongholds against the attacks of an enemy. An idea may be had of the dimensions of some of these caves from the account given by Denon of skirmishes and combats fought in the grottoes or caverns of Egypt, by the Arab residents against their invaders under Napoleon.

According to Burckhardt, El Botthin, a district east of the Jordan, contains many thousand caverns, made in the rocks by the ancient inhabitants of the country. Most of the houses, even in those villages which are uninhabited, are a kind of grotto, composed of walls placed against the projecting points of the rocks, in such a manner that the walls of the inner chamber, in which the inhabitants live, are partly of bare rock, and partly of mason work. Besides these retreats, there are in this neighborhood a number of very large caverns, the construction of which must have cost infinite labor, since they are formed in the hard rock. There is only one door of entrance, which is so regularly fitted into the rock, that it shuts like the door of a house. It appears then, that this country was formerly inhabited by Troglodytes,* without reckoning the villages whose inhabitants may be regarded as such. There are still to be found many families living in caverns sufficiently spacious to contain them and all their cattle.

The importance of the discoveries in these remote regions, of extensive dwellings among rocks cut out of them or annexed to them, the whole, as already known, justifies the inference of a state of things, of national power, and of intercourse in times of the remotest antiquity, entirely different from any conception we could previously form. It is pleasant to see the accounts of ancient writers justified; and still more so to see the allusions and historical facts of Scripture supported by existing evidences, to which no possible imputation of inaccuracy can be attached.†

* A people bordering upon Æthiopia, near the Arabian gulf, who lived in caves, whence they have their name. They are said to feed on serpents.

† Burckhardt's Travels.

It will be understood that the traveller here cited is speaking of the antiquities and remains of an ancient city which he conjectured to be Petra, the capital of Arabia Petræa, a place, which, as far as he knew, no European traveller, previous to that time, had ever visited.

LETTER XXXVIII.

Description of the eagle given in the book of Job, alluded to in Matthew, and other sacred writers,—Illustrations from Scripture,—Swiftness of the eagle, his sense of smelling inferior to the vulture,—Description of the vulture, as found in Egypt, emblem of desolation,—Illustration from Scripture,—The stork, a common bird in Palestine, differs from the white stork which haunts inhabited places, protected and valued by the Mahommedans, held in veneration among the Thessalonians, prohibited to be used as food, fir-trees the house of the stork,—Illustration from Scripture,—Excessive heat,—Pastimes of the Arabs,—Wild goat of the rocks,—Dangers attending the chase of the Ibex,—Places in the sacred writings where the goat kind is mentioned,—Illustration from Scripture,—The “pleasant roe,” referred to in Job, identified as the she goat,—Female ibex an emblem of a beautiful woman,—Chameleon classed among animals unclean,—Illustration from Scripture,—The lizard once eaten in Arabia and Judea, forbidden as food, found in different parts of Palestine and Egypt,—American missionary,—The young Druse,—Barren and rocky country, once rich in pasturage,—Route from Acre to Tiberias and Jerusalem, beauty and fruitfulness of the country, Eden of the East,—Produce of the Holy Land under a wise and beneficent government.

As we passed the high and rocky precipices of Lebanon, the eagle was frequently seen soaring far above our heads, or perched upon the loftiest cliff of the mountain; forcibly bringing to mind the description of that bird, as given in the book of Job. The eagle is frequently introduced in Scripture, but nowhere, it is thought, with more truth and beauty than by the inspired writer now mentioned: “Doth the eagle mount up at thy command, and make her nest on high? She dwelleth and abideth on the rock, upon the crag of the rock,

and the strong place. From thence she seeketh the prey, and her eyes behold afar off. Her young ones also suck up blood, and where the slain are, there is she."

The language of the Saviour, as recorded in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, is supposed to allude to the last line in the above quotation: "For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together;" which has been understood to mean, wherever the Jewish people, who were morally and judicially dead, might be, there would the Roman armies, whose standard was an eagle, and whose strength and fierceness resembled that of the king of birds in comparison with his fellows, pursue and devour them.

As the eagle sheds his feathers in the spring, he is said to renew his youth; in this sense he is alluded to by the Psalmist, also in Isaiah: "Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagles."—Ps. ciii. 5. "But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint."—Isaiah xl. 31.

Of all known birds the eagle mounts not only the highest, but also with the greatest rapidity: he has been known to fly three miles above the level of the sea, and rapidly against a strong gale. The sacred writers frequently allude to the swiftness of the eagle in his flight. The chariots of Nebuchadnezzar, in his march against Jerusalem, are compared to a whirlwind; and his horses as surpassing the swiftness of eagles.*

Of all known birds, also, the eagle has the sharpest sight: "his eyes behold afar off;" his sense of smelling is known to be far inferior to that of the vulture, a bird referred to by the prophet, as an emblem of desolation:† "There shall the great owl make her nest, and lay, and hatch, and gather under

* Jeremiah iv. 13. -

† Hasselquist has the following notice of the vulture, as found in Egypt: "The appearance of the bird is as horrid as can well be imagined. The face

her shadow ; there shall the vultures also be gathered, every one with her mate."—Isaiah xxxiv. 15.

On our route, we frequently saw the stork, or the boo-onk, as the Arabs call him, a very common bird in Palestine, and noted for his long beak and legs, which characterize that species. This bird is of the crane kind, quite tame, and seemed not at all disturbed at our approach. He differs from the white stork, which haunts inhabited places, and does the office of scavenger in removing offal from the streets, which would otherwise taint and corrupt the air. For this reason they are protected and valued by the Mahommedans, who consider it no common crime to destroy one of these birds. They were held in such high veneration, in times of old, among the Thessalonians, that to kill the domesticated stork was a crime expiable only by death.* This bird was included among the number prohibited by Moses : " And the stork, and the heron, after her kind, and the lapwing and the bat."—Deut. xiv. 18.

" As for the stork, the fir-trees are her house," says the Psalmist, (Ps. civ. 17,) because, as very properly remarked, the low houses in Palestine did not afford so favorable a situation for the stork to build in, as the houses of Europe, and she, doubtless for that reason, resorted to the pine trees.

Descending the lower grounds the heat became excessive, and we halted for a slight refreshment near an inviting spring of water ; but without shelter to screen us from the scorching rays of the sun. Here we encountered a party of Arabs amusing themselves with an exhibition of dogs and other animals, whose performances seemed to give great satisfaction, judging by the noisy mirth and extravagant gestures

is naked and wrinkled, the eyes are large and black, the beak black and crooked, the talons large and extended, ready for prey, and the whole body polluted with filth. Notwithstanding this, the inhabitants of Egypt cannot be enough thankful to Providence for this bird. All the places round Cairo are filled with the dead bodies of asses and camels ; and thousands of these birds fly about and devour the carcasses before they putrify, and fill the air with noxious exhalations."

* Script. Nat. History, p. 358.

of the by-standers. This sort of pastime is common among the natives here, who are frequently seen in groups, exhibiting animals of various kinds, trained to all manner of buffooneries and apish tricks.

We were soon on our journey again, travelling a snail-slow pace over barren and rocky roads, without the distant sign of shelter or shade; no very cheering prospect to travellers badly mounted. We occasionally met with a species of the long-horned wild goat, remarkable for the facility with which they can climb the precipices, or leap from rock to rock. They are known to mount a perpendicular rock of fifteen feet at three leaps, or rather, three successive bounds. The wild goat does not seem as if he found any footing on the rock, appearing to touch it merely to be repelled like an elastic substance striking against a hard body. It is true, also, as related of this animal, if he be between two rocks which are near each other, and wants to reach the top, he leaps from the side of one rock to the other, alternately, till he has attained the summit.

The wild goat is found amongst the precipices of the high hills, and in places barren of pasture. None but the inhabitants of the mountains engage in the chase of the ibex, or wild goat of the rocks; for, as truly said, it requires not only a head that can bear to look down from the greatest heights without terror, address and sure-footedness in the most difficult and dangerous passes, and to be an excellent marksman, but also much strength and vigor to support hunger, cold and prodigious fatigue.*

* We are referred to three places in Scripture where an animal of the goat kind is mentioned either directly, or by allusion. In Samuel we read, "Saul went to seek David and his men, on the rocks of the wild goats."—1 Sam. xxiv. 2, literally, on the superficies, or on the face of the rocks of the Jolim, or of the wild goats. The Psalmist says, "The high mountains to the Ibices (wild goats) are a refuge; rocks are a refuge to the conies."—Psalm civ. 18. In Job this creature is more distinctly referred to, and its manners described at greater length: "Knowest thou the time when the wild goats of the rock bring forth? or canst thou mark when the hinds do calve? Canst thou number the months that they fulfil? or knowest thou the time when

On our way we alighted to pick up a chameleon that lay basking in the sun; the simple color of its body, as it imbibed the rays of the light, changed into a variety of beautiful hues. It was about nine inches in length from the point of the nose to the end of the tail; quite tame, suffering us to handle it, and showing no disposition to escape from the end of the stick to which it clung. In the act of catching insects, the chameleon darts out its tongue the whole length of its body, and instantly contracts it again; the imperceptible swiftness of the motion once led to the popular belief that the chameleon lived on air; it is now well known that its principal food is flies, which it catches in darting the tongue in the manner already described. In the Levitical law the chameleon was classed among the animals unclean: "And the ferret, and the chameleon, and the lizard, and the snail, and the mole."—Lev. xi. 30.

The lizard and the snail here spoken of were probably eaten in Arabia and Judea, since Moses forbids them as food; they are eaten now, we are told, in some parts of America. Some lizards in Arabia are known to measure a cubit in length, and some found in India are said to be much larger. We saw lizards of various lengths in different parts of Palestine; those among the ruins of Cæsarea Palestina, in every particular, were the most remarkable. In Egypt we met with them in great numbers, and of uncommon length; all quite harmless.

they bring forth? They bow themselves, they bring forth their young ones, they cast out their sorrows. Their young ones are in good liking, they grow up with corn; they go forth, and return not unto them."—Job xxxix. 1—4.

In Proverbs this animal is presented in a feminine form: "Let thy wife be as the loving hind, and the pleasant roe."—Prov. v. 19.

These two last passages, remarks a commentator, must be unhappily rendered: for what is in one the wild goat of the rocks, is in the other the pleasant roe; a creature so very different, that one rendering or the other must be erroneous. Mr. Taylor, without scruple, takes the pleasant roe here mentioned for the wild goat of the rock; and adds, the difficulty in the passage may be removed, if it be possible, among the Orientals, to consider the female Ibex, or she goat, as an emblem of a beautiful woman; but it can hardly be conceived how an animal so uncomely can, in any language, be adopted as an image of the fair sex.

Proceeding on our route, we arrived, rather late in the evening, at the hospitable mansion of Mr. Thompson, the American missionary at Beirout. Here we passed a social hour or two, talking of friends and homes in distant lands. One of the ladies belonging to the household was a native of Boston, and had been a resident in Lebanon and its neighborhood for three years and over, and was looking for the close of another year, at which time she expected to sail for America. Early on the following morning we took leave of our kind host and family, and recommenced our route over the passes of Lebanon. Previous to our departure, an interesting young man, a Druse, mingled with the group. He had come to wish us a pleasant journey. He spoke English quite well, and told us himself that his excellent friend, Mr. Thompson, had taught him to converse in our language, and to read the Bible in his own.

The direct road from Beirout to Damascus, like that from Joppa to Jerusalem, is mostly mountainous, rocky and barren, presenting few or no intervals of vegetation, pasturage or woodland; these parts, however, as Dr. Clarke says, as well as the countries bordering on the desert to the south, maintained numerous flocks and herds, anciently; and that places are not wanting where the same might be maintained, at this day, did circumstances admit the necessary safety and protection. The aspect of the country through the route from Acre to Tiberias and Jerusalem, presents a very different picture; the tourist just mentioned, who travelled in this direction, describes the cultivation as everywhere marvellous; affording one of the most striking pictures of human industry which it is possible to behold. The limestone rocks and stony valleys of Judea were entirely covered with plantations of figs, vines, and olive trees; not a single spot seemed to be neglected. The hills, from their bases to their uppermost summits, were entirely covered with gardens; all of these were free from weeds, and in the highest state of agricultural perfection. Even the sides of the barren mountains had been rendered

fertile, by being divided into terraces, like steps, rising one above another, whereon soil had been accumulated with astonishing labor. Among the standing crops, we noticed millet, cotton, linseed and tobacco; and occasionally, small fields of barley. A sight of this territory can alone convey any adequate idea of its surprising produce; it is truly the Eden of the East, rejoicing in the abundance of its wealth. Under a wise and beneficent government, the produce of the Holy Land would exceed all calculation. Its perennial harvest, the salubrity of its air; its limpid springs; its rivers, lakes, and matchless plains; its hills and vales; all these, added to the serenity of the climate, prove this land to be indeed, "a field which the Lord hath blessed: God hath given it of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine."*

* Clarke's Travels.

LETTER XXXIX.

Herds of Camels,—Flying messenger,—Arabian steed,—Daring exploit of Amim Bey,—Massacre of the Mamlouks at Cairo,—The Bey's horse leaping the precipice, miraculous escape of the rider,—Arab fidelity,—Wandering life of the Arab,—Galloping in the desert alone,—Speed of the dromedary,—The Aashare, or the dromedary in Barbary, race between him and the swiftest barbs and greyhounds,—Ostrich endued with unrivalled rapidity of running,—Illustrations from Scripture,—Characteristic of the ostrich, in love with its own shadow, speed of the ostrich, swifter than the English courser,—Dromedary, more numerous than the camel,—Military corps under Napoleon, commanded by dromedaries,—The "swift ships," mentioned in Job, analysis of the import of the words,—Camels called the "ships of the desert,"—Difficulties which embarrass western translators of Eastern poetry,—Hebrew poets, their comparisons drawn from objects with which they were conversant, a knowledge of the things they knew necessary to understand their language,—The camel regarded by the Arabs as a gift from Heaven, described by Bruce,—Fruitless attempt of the drivers to raise the camels from their resting position,—Practice of the breeders in teaching the camel to kneel when young,—Camel's flesh substituted for bread, water obtained from the stomach of that animal,—Store of water carried by the camel, manner of diluting his food,—Repository for the water contrived by nature with such properties that the liquor never putrifies.

On our journey to Damascus we met with several large herds of camels, heavily laden, as usual, toiling patiently on at the caravan rate of three miles an hour. At a short distance we espied the dromedary, the flying messenger, aptly called the "ship of the desert," whose speed outstrips the fleet greyhound, or the swiftest barbs of the Libyan breed. The rider was an express, galloping in hot haste for some distant district; he was soon out of sight. "They have fleet steeds that follow," was the momentary thought that crossed us, as the form of the rider was lost in the distance.

In another direction we encountered a solitary horseman, mounted upon a fine Arabian steed, dashing at full speed down the rough precipices, and up steepes that seemed inaccessible;—another messenger, bound, perchance, on some

speedy errand ; or the leader of a wild race, who live on plunder, and set at defiance the viceroy of Egypt and his vassals. The noble horse bore his master as if proud of his burden, and leaped from rock to rock with the agility of the ibex, and with as sure a foot.* The solitary rider seemed the monarch of all he surveyed ; and if a dweller in the desert, he would be found, like the red man of the forest, to be attached to his mode of life.

With all its deprivations, the wandering life of the Arab undoubtedly possesses a charm peculiar to itself. A young French renegado confessed to Chateaubriand, that he never found himself alone galloping in the desert, without a sensation approaching to rapture which was indescribable.

At full speed the dromedary is computed to travel a hundred miles a day ; holding its rapid pace without showing signs of fatigue, or inclination for water or food. Morgan, in his history of Algiers, states that the dromedary in Barbary, called Aashare, will, in one night, and through a level country, traverse as much ground as any single horse can in ten. The Arabs affirm that it makes nothing of holding its rapid pace, which is a most violent hard trot, for four and twenty hours on the stretch, without showing the least sign of weariness,

* The remarkable agility of the Arabian horse was tested in the daring exploit of Amim Bey, the only one who escaped the cold-blooded slaughter of the Mamlouk cavalry at Cairo. The anecdote is familiar to all readers of the civil history of modern Egypt :—Being detained by business, Amim Bey was too late to occupy his proper place in the procession, and he only arrived at the citadel at the moment when the troops were passing the gate. He waited till they had entered the fatal passage, intending to join his own body ; but seeing the gates shut suddenly, and hearing the discharge of fire-arms, he put spurs to his horse, and galloped out of the city. He spurred the noble animal which he rode till he made him clamber upon the rampart, and preferring rather to be dashed to pieces than to be slaughtered in cold blood, drove him to leap down the precipice, a height that has been estimated at from thirty to forty feet, or even more ; yet fortune so favored him, that, though the horse was killed, the rider escaped. His horse, says Sir Francis Henniker, leaped over the parapet like leaping out of a four pair of stairs window. Amim Bey entrusted himself to some Arabs, who, notwithstanding the offer of a large reward, refused to give him up.

or inclination to bait; and that having then swallowed a ball or two of a sort of paste made up of barley-meal, and may be a little powder of dry dates among it, with a bowl of water or camel's milk, the indefatigable animal will seem as fresh as at first setting out, and be ready to run at the same scarcely credible rate, for as many hours longer; and so on from one extremity of the African desert to the other; provided its rider could hold out without sleep, and bear thirst

—————"with as enduring lip
As Ishmael, wafted on his desert ship."

The traveller just mentioned was one of a party in a diversion in which a dromedary contended the race with some of the swiftest barbs of the true Libyan breed, shaped like the greyhound, and which will sometimes run down an ostrich, an animal proverbial for its extraordinary swiftness.* Morgan gives the

* We have referred to the speed of the eagle on the wing; the ostrich, though incapable of flying, is endued with unrivalled rapidity of running, compared with birds whose flight is proverbially swift, powerful and persevering. Notwithstanding the stupidity of this animal, says Dr. Shaw, its Creator hath amply provided for its safety by endowing it with extraordinary swiftness, and a surprising apparatus for escaping from its enemy. The wonderful velocity of this bird is referred to in the sacred writings: "What time she lifteth up herself on high she scorneth the horse and his rider."—Job xxxix. 18. She gives him an opportunity only of admiring at a distance the extraordinary agility, and the stateliness, likewise, of her motions, the richness of her plumage, and her expanded, quivering wing. The pride of the peacock is his train, which, when erected, forms a fan of the most resplendent hues: the pride of the ostrich is her expanded, quivering wing, one of the characteristics, as mentioned by Dr. Shaw, of that remarkable bird. I had several opportunities, says the Doctor, of amusing myself with the actions and behavior of the ostrich. It was very diverting to observe with what dexterity and equipoise of body it would play and frisk about on all occasions. In the heat of the day, particularly, it would strut along the sunny sides of the house with great majesty. It would be perpetually fanning, and priding itself with its quivering, expanded wings, and seemed at every turn to admire and be in love with its own shadow. The wings of the ostrich, by their rapid and unwearied vibrations, equally serve her for sails and oars; while her feet, no less assisting in conveying her out of sight, are no less insensible of fatigue. Her wonderful velocity vindicates the assertion of the inspired writer: "She scorneth the horse and his rider."

following account of a trial of speed between the Aashare and the Numidian runners: "We started," he says, "like racers, and at the first, most of the best mounted amongst us kept pace pretty well, but our grass-fed horses soon flagged: several of the Libyan and Numidian runners held pace, till we, who still followed upon a good round hand gallop, could no longer discern them, and then gave out; as we were told after their return. When the dromedary had been out of sight about half an hour, we again espied it flying towards us with an amazing velocity, and in a very few moments was among us, and seemingly nothing concerned; while the horses and mares were all on a foam, and scarcely able to breathe, as was likewise a fleet, tall greyhound that had no sooner got back to us than he lay down panting as if ready to expire."

A passage in Job, in a metaphorical sense, is supposed to refer to the dromedary: the days of the sacred writer, in the phraseology of the East, are likened to "the swift ships that are passed away." The oriental form of expression, it appears, has perplexed the learned commentators: "Now my days are swifter than a post: they flee away, they see no good. They are passed away as the swift ships, as the eagle hasteth to the prey."—Job ix. 25, 26.

The following is Mr. Taylor's analysis of the import of the words, given with his usual clearness of illustration: My days pass faster than a running messenger, who exerts his speed when sent on important business; they even fly, like a fugitive who escapes for his life from an enemy; they do not look around them to see for anything good; they are passed as ships of swiftness, as a vulture flying hastily to the newly fallen prey. By marking the climax, we find the messenger swift, the fugitive more swift, the ships swifter than the fugitive, and the vulture swiftest of all. Now, says Mr. Taylor, should we not retain the whole of these comparisons to inland subjects? which it seems natural that Job should be best acquainted with, considering his country, the scene of the poem. If it can be rendered supposable that any animal, or

class of animals, may be locally and metaphorically called a ship or ships, and may exceed in swiftness a post, a messenger, or a fugitive, then perhaps the passage may be illustrative by appeal to such local phraseology; and then, too, the original Hebrew *Abeh* may be discovered to mean either a country famous for its breed of swift animals, or a peculiar breed itself so named. Such an animal, Mr. Taylor thinks, we may seek in the dromedary, a creature well known to Job, and possibly described in the word *Abeh*; if that word imports, as by its radical meaning it should appear to do, the swelling dromedary, alluding to the humps on its back.*

Bruce tells us the camels are emphatically called by the Arabs "the ships of the desert;" or, as Sandys has it, the ships of Arabia, the deserts their seas. Such, as justly remarked, is the effect of local metaphorical language! And such are the difficulties which embarrass Western translators of Eastern poetry.†

The Arabs regard the camel as a gift from Heaven, without

* The dromedary is a species of smaller camel, having on his back a kind of natural saddle, composed of two great bunches. He is known to be more numerous, and more universal than the camel; the latter breed, marked by one protuberance on the back, is chiefly confined to Turkey; while the former is found in all the northern parts of Africa, in Egypt, Persia, South Tartary, and the northern parts of India. Napoleon, when commanding the French army in Egypt, formed a military corps mounted on dromedaries.

† Poets, like other men, remarks a writer on Hebrew poetry, could only draw comparisons from objects with which they were conversant; hence we have in Scripture many allusions to the phenomena of nature, as extant in the countries where the writers of nature resided,—storms, tempests, earthquakes, thunder and lightning, &c. The shepherd king describes the Lord as his shepherd, who leads him in security;—not as his steersman, who brings him safely into port; for he was little acquainted with nautical affairs. Very few are the descriptions of the sea or its inhabitants, in Job, although the writer ransacks earth and heaven with wonderful science. Poets who dwell in tents have little reference to extensive architecture. But to understand their language, it is necessary to acquire as intimate a knowledge as possible of the things they knew; and even when they treat of things spiritual and celestial: because these are signified by means of terrestrial objects or incidents; and the just understanding of the one may lead to a just understanding of the other.

whose aid they could neither exist, trade, nor travel. He is an animal furnished with parts and qualities adapted to the office he is employed to discharge. The driest thistle and the barest thorn is all the food this useful quadruped requires ; and even these, to save time, he eats while advancing on his journey, without stopping or occasioning a moment of delay. As it is his lot to cross immense deserts where no water is found, and countries not even moistened by the dew of heaven, he is endued with the power, at one watering-place, to lay in a store with which he supplies himself for thirty days to come. To contain this enormous quantity of fluid, nature has provided large cisterns within him, from which, once filled, he draws at pleasure the quantity he wants, and pours it into his stomach with the same effect as if he then drank from a spring ; and with this he travels patiently and vigorously all day long, carrying a prodigious load upon him, through countries infected with poisonous winds, and glowing with parching and never-cooling sands.*

Mr. Bruce was detained at one of the halting places in the vain attempt of the drivers to raise the camels from their resting position ; only one could get upon his legs, and that one did not stand two minutes until he kneeled down, and could never be raised afterwards. We have frequently seen the camel drivers put to no little trouble in the effort of raising the overloaded, worn-down animals to their feet.

When a camel is born, it is said to be the practice of the breeders to tie his fore-feet under his belly, and a carpet over his back. In this manner he is taught the habit of bending his knees to rest himself, or when being loaded or unloaded. Finding the camels would not rise, adds Bruce, we killed two of them, and took so much flesh as might serve for the deficiency of bread, and, from the stomach of each of the camels, got about four gallons of water, which the Bishareen Arab managed with great dexterity. It is known to people conversant with natural history, that the camel has within him reser-

* Bruce's Travels.

voirs in which he can preserve drink for any number of days he is used to. In these caravans of long course, which come from the Niger across the desert of Selima, it is said that each camel, by drinking, lays in a store of water sufficient to support him for forty days. This needs corroboration : fourteen or sixteen days, it is well known, an ordinary camel will live, though he hath no fresh supply of water. When he chews his cud, or when he eats, you constantly see him throw off from his repository, mouthfuls of water to dilute his food ; and nature has contrived this vessel with such properties, that the water within it never putrefies, nor turns unwholesome. Though the camel chews the cud, yet, as the division of the hoof was not complete, he was included among the animals marked as unclean.

LETTER XL.

Force and beauty of Scriptural allusions,—Knowledge of Scripture natural history essential to a clear understanding of various passages in the Bible,—Imperfect and brief notices of the animals referred to in the Sacred writings,—Equivocal properties of the bat, its capacity of flying its only pretension of being ranked among birds,—Bats of Ethiopia,—Vampire bats of South America, suck the blood of men while they sleep,—The bat included in the list of unclean animals forbidden to the Jews,—Illustration from Scripture,—Birds permitted as food not pointed out in the Mosaic law,—Birds classed into clean and unclean, those that live on grain not prohibited,—Birds of prey rejected, including those of crooked beaks and strong talons,—Instances of a rule designed for general application,—Characteristics of animals derived from the feet,—No reference to conformation as the means of distinguishing birds into clean and unclean,—Animals described by naturalists arranged according to the peculiarities of their formation,—Mosaic line of permission, and exclusion of animals for food,—Solipedes,—Fissipedes,—Animals having feet divided into more than two parts unclean,—Levitical distinction of animals into clean and unclean, derived from the conformation of their feet,—Fish without fins or scales unclean, Illustration from Scripture,—Impure birds,—Locust eaten in Palestine,—Various opinions in regard to the legal purity or impurity of animals,—The clean and unclean conveyed into the ark,—Illustration from Scripture,—Symbols,—Design of Moses in prohibiting the use of swine's flesh,—Hebrews enjoined to deprive themselves of several sorts of food, preserved from the temptation of adoring animals,—Animals not allowed to be eaten, taken, or touched by an impure beast,—Illustrations from Scripture,—Humane provision of the Jewish lawgiver.

IN the course of these Letters we have referred to some of the animals which are mentioned in the Bible, with the object of calling the reader's attention to the force and beauty of the allusions to them as given in the language of the inspired writers. The animal creation has furnished ample materials for enforcing the sublime truths contained in the sacred records; a knowledge, therefore, of Scripture natural history is considered essential to a full understanding of various passages in the Bible, which otherwise might be obscure or unintelligible.

On the subject under consideration our remarks, of course,

must be limited and brief. We have referred to such animals as crossed us in our several routes, and these form but a small portion of the tribes which haunt the desert, or dwell in places inhabited by man.

We have noticed but a fractional part of the feathered race, if the prohibited list be considered, which, including birds of the air, the land and the water, amounted to twenty in number; in this catalogue is comprised the bat, the unclean creature, whose equivocal properties seem to exclude it from the list either of birds or beasts.*

We may here remark that those birds permitted as food are not pointed out in the Mosaic law; an omission which has been noticed by learned writers. Birds are classed into clean and unclean: "Of all clean birds ye shall eat."—Deut. xiv.

* The capacity of flying is the only pretension which the bat can claim in being ranked among birds; yet its wings are not made of feathers, nor does it lay eggs, like the bird, but suckles its young. It has the body of the mouse, the mouth of a quadruped, and is covered with hair. It builds no nest, and when, in seeking food, it is obliged to leave its young, it hangs them against the wall, where they adhere by clinging. Some of the bats of Ethiopia are said to have long tails like those of mice; some have four ears, others only two. We met with bats in prodigious numbers in the subterraneous passages and other excavations in various parts of Palestine. The bat is said to be untamable; some dangerous. Travellers tell us the vampire bats of South America are very large, and will suck the blood of men while they sleep, fanning upon some uncovered part, while, at the same time, by the fanning of their wings, they refresh the sufferer, who is in very great danger, unless he awakes.

The bat is considered too much a bird to be properly a beast, too much a beast to be properly a bird. It is, however, very distinctly included in the unclean animals forbidden to the Jews: "And every creeping thing that flieth is unclean to you: they shall not be eaten."—Deut. xiv. 19. The legs of this "creeping thing that flieth" appear to be absolutely different from those of all other animals. In order to advance, he raises both his front legs at once, and places them at a small distance forward; at the same time, the thumb of each foot points outward, and the creature catches with the claw at anything near by; his two hind-legs he stretches behind him, so that the five toes of each foot are also directed backward; he supports himself on the sole of this foot, and secures himself by means of the claws on his toes; then he raises his body on the front-legs and throws himself forward by folding the upper-arm on the fore-arm, which motion is assisted by the extension of the hind-legs, which also push the body forward.—*Nat. Hist. of Palestine.*

2. Birds which live on grain were, doubtless, not prohibited; the wilder game were lawful or not, according to the nature of their food. Birds of prey, which subsisted on creatures having life, or having had life, were decidedly rejected; this included all with crooked beaks, and strong talons.

The same principle of admitting no second digestion of flesh which had its influence in distinguishing animals, has its influence also here; though we cannot trace it in all cases, and indeed, in some cases, the exception seems to have been occasioned by less obvious causes. The writer here cited, considers the animals mentioned in Leviticus, eleventh chapter, fourth verse, &c., as instances of a rule designed for general application: the law excludes all, the feet of which are not by one cleft thoroughly divided into two parts, as the camel; all, the feet of which, though thoroughly divided by one cleft into two parts externally, yet internally differ, by the construction of their bones, from the character of the permitted kinds, as the swine; all, the feet of which are thoroughly divided by two clefts into three toes, as the saphan, or coney; all, the feet of which are thoroughly divided by three clefts into four toes, as the hare; and therefore, a fortiori, if there be any animals having feet divided into five toes, they are so much further removed from the character fixed as the rule of permission.

From the legislator who had used the strictest injunctions on the subject of animals, clean and unclean, we might naturally expect directions equally strict respecting birds, a class no less distinguished among themselves by their qualities and modes of life. But here, in the opinion of a learned commentator, his characteristics of animals derived from the feet failed; nor was it easy, he thinks, to fix on marks which should in every instance guide the learned and the unlearned, the country rustic, and the respectable citizen. Hence, we meet in the Mosaic institutes with no reference to conformation, as the means of distinguishing birds into clean or unclean, lawful or unlawful; but a list of exceptions forms the sacred directory, and certain kinds are forbidden, without a word concerning those which are allowed.

All animals which naturalists undertake to describe must be arranged according to the peculiarities of their formation as they strike the eye ; among which will always be reckoned those which are adapted to motion,—the legs and feet. These appear to have furnished the obvious means of distinction, not to call it classification, no less to Moses, anciently, than to Linnæus, of late ; for, in truth, adds the writer here cited, the Mosaic line of permission and exclusion of animals for food, &c., is drawn by means of those divisions which nature has appointed to their feet. Solipedes, or animals of one hoof, such as the horse and the ass, are unclean : Fissipedes, or animals having hoofs divided into two parts, are clean ; but then this division must be entire, not partial ; effective, not apparent only ; and, besides its external construction, its internal, its anatomical construction, must also be strictly analogous with this formation. Moreover, animals having feet divided into more than two parts are unclean ; so that the number of their toes, as three, four, or five, is cause sufficient for the rejection of them, whatever be their other qualities. Such we may accept as the principle of the Levitical distinction of animals into clean and unclean, derived from the conformation of their feet ; their rumination is a distinct character, but a character absolutely unavailing, without the more obvious and evident marks manifest in the construction of these members. Fish that had neither fins nor scales were unclean : “ And all that have not fins and scales in the seas, and in the rivers, of all that move in the waters, and of any living thing which is in the waters they shall be an abomination unto you.”—Lev. xi. 10.

Birds which walk on the ground with four feet, such as moles, and flies that have many feet, were impure ; but the law excepts locusts, which have their hind feet higher than those before, and rather leap than walk : “ Yet these may ye eat, of every flying creeping thing that goeth upon all four, which have legs above their feet, to leap withal upon the earth ; even these of them ye may eat ; the locust after his

kind, and the beetle after his kind, and the grasshopper after his kind."—Lev. xi. 21, 22. These are the clean and may be eaten, as in fact they were, and still are, in Palestine, and other eastern countries.

In connection with the subject under consideration we would remark, that various opinions exist in regard to the legal purity or impurity of animals. Some suppose the distinction with reference to the clean and unclean, obtained before the flood ; since God commanded Noah to convey seven couples of clean animals into the ark, and only two of unclean : "Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by sevens, the male and the female ; and of beasts that are not clean by two, the male and the female."—Gen. vii. 2.

Some regard it as altogether symbolical, as denoting the moral purity which the Hebrews were to imitate, and the impurity which they were to avoid, according to the nature of these animals. In this sense it is illustrated as follows : thus, if a hog, for an example, signified gluttony ; a hare, lasciviousness ; a sheep, gentleness ; a dove, simplicity ; then the principal design of Moses, in prohibiting the use of swine's flesh, was to condemn gluttony and excess in eating or drinking ; or, in recommending sheep, or doves, it was to recommend gentleness, &c. It was thought by some, that God proposed, by this means, to accustom the Hebrews to temperance, by enjoining them to deprive themselves of several sorts of food ; or, that God intended to preserve the Hebrews from the temptation of adoring animals by permitting them to eat the generality of those which were regarded as gods in Egypt ; and leading them to look with horror on others, to which, likewise, divine honors were paid. Others are of opinion that the divine legislator forbade the use of those beasts, birds and fishes, the flesh of which was thought pernicious to health ; those which were wild, dangerous or venomous, or were so esteemed. God, likewise, who designed to separate the Hebrews from other people as a nation consecrated to his service, seems to have interdicted the use of certain animals

which were considered as unclean, that by this figurative purity they might be inclined to another purity, real and perfect, as is intimated in Leviticus, twentieth chapter, twenty-fourth verse.

Most nations have fixed on certain animals as less fit for human food than others ; in other words, as unclean ; and this independent of their properties, as more or less salutary or injurious to health. Yet, it has been observed, we find considerable variations of opinion and practice, even among nations inhabiting the same countries. The horse, held unlawful by the Hebrews, is eaten by the Tartars ; the camel, forbidden to the Jews, is eaten by the Arabs ; as is also the hare, and others.

Among the Hebrews, animals were not allowed to be eaten which had been taken or touched by a devouring or impure beast, such as a dog, a wolf, or a bear ; nor any animal that died of itself. Whosoever touched the carcass of it was impure until evening ; and till that time, and after he had washed his clothes, he could not associate with others : “And if any beast of which ye may eat, die ; he that toucheth the carcass thereof shall be unclean until the even. And he that eateth the carcass of it shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even ; he also that beareth the carcass of it shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even.”—Lev. xi. 39, 40.

Among the benevolent provisions of the Jewish lawgiver, to inculcate humanity on the Israelites, it was ordered, if they find a bird's nest, not to take the dam with the young, but to suffer the old one to fly away, and to take the young only.

LETTER XLI.

Route resumed,—Quarters for the night,—Cold nights,—Manner of sleeping in the desert,—Place of encampment,—Solitudes infested with wild beasts, Character of the wolf, as given by the sacred writers,—Illustrations from Scripture,—Peaceful reign of the Messiah,—Tents pitched near water springs,—Sitting by the rivers,—Illustration from Scripture,—Tents of early invention,—Dwellers in tents, same kind of habitation adopted by the Israelites during their journey towards the promised land, adapted to such as lead a pastoral life,—Arabs' wandering mode of life unchanged,—Cloth of goat's hair woven by the women,—The Arab tribes compared to the gypsies in England,—Splendor of the Turkish noble's tent,—Tents set apart for the use of women,—Interest excited in traversing the land of Judea,—Every fact interesting to the Christian which illustrates the early annals of his religion,—Social meeting,—Wolves and Hyænas,—Hyæna, seldom mentioned in Scripture, referred to in Samuel and Jeremiah, well known in Aleppo, held in great horror, extremely wild, sullen, and ferocious,—De la Roque,—Shelter of the wild boars, ounces, and jackals,—Lions driven out from the inundation of the Jordan,—Illustrations from Scripture,—View of Damascus,—Incident in the life of the prophet,—Arch of Victory.

WE resume our route for Damascus, and invite the reader to accompany us through a pleasant path shaded by cypresses, tall oaks, and pines; and cooled with the refreshing flow of a deep, clear stream, made doubly grateful after a toilsome journey through a country destitute of verdure, and naked to the sun's scorching heat. We took up our quarters for the night beneath the shade of a few mulberry trees which stood upon the margin of the river. Notwithstanding the intense heat of the day, the nights were cold and damp, and we were glad to creep under cover of a blanket. Our guides lay comfortably encased in their own bags, a mode of sleeping generally adopted by the Arabs in their journeys crossing the deserts.

Our place of encampment was a few hours' distance from Damascus; as the prospect of a tolerable road opened before us, we resolved to push forward betimes, and arrive in the city at an early hour. We passed the night in the vicinity of a mountainous, savage region; a solitude infested with wild

beasts, and echoing to the howl of the hunger-pinched wolf.* We pitched our tent, as already mentioned, on the margin of a cool stream, following the custom of the shepherd described by the poet,—

“ Or haply, when the summer sunbeam pours,
He rears beside the brook his sheltering tent.” †

* The wolf is frequently mentioned in the Scriptures, and the character given him by the sacred writers corresponds with that drawn by naturalists. He is ravenous, greedy, and of remarkable keenness of smell ; in this sense he is frequently alluded to in the Old and New Testament. False teachers are wolves in sheep's clothing : “ Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.”—Matt. vii. 15. The “ evening wolves ” are mentioned by the prophet : “ Their horses also are swifter than the leopards, and more fierce than the evening wolves.”—Hab. i. 8. “ Her princes within her are roaring lions ; her judges are evening wolves ; they gnaw not the bones till the morrow.”—Zeph. iii. 3. The eleventh chapter of Isaiah, sixth verse, furnishes a beautiful illustration of the peaceful reign of the coming Messiah : “ The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together ; and a little child shall lead them.”

† Tents were of very early invention, and were used as the habitation of men by Jabal, who is called the father of all such as dwell in tents : “ And Adah bare Jabal ; he was the father of such as dwell in tents, and of such as have cattle.”—Gen. iv. 20.

The patriarchal ages are described as of shepherds dwelling in tents. Abraham dwelt in tents with Isaac and Jacob ; Lot had flocks, and herds, and tents ; Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents, and his descendants succeeded a people designated Shepherd Kings, in the land of Goshen, under the Pharaohs of Egypt. The same kind of habitation was adopted by the Israelites during their long journeys towards the promised land. Tents were very generally used in ancient times among the nations ; their way of life being in general pastoral, locomotion became necessary for pasturage, and dwellings adopted for such a life became indispensable. But the people most remarkable for this unsettled and wandering mode of life are the Arabs, who, from the time of Ishmael to the present day, have continued the custom of dwelling in tents. Amidst the revolutions which have transferred kingdoms from one possessor to another, these wandering tribes, adds the writer from whom we abstract this note, still dwell unsubdued and wild as was their progenitor. The covering of their tents is usually made of the cloth of goat's hair, woven by their women. Their mode of life has been aptly compared to that of gypsies in England,—men, women, children and cattle all lodging together. For convenience and magnificence hardly anything equals the tent of the Turkish noble, who spares nothing in decorating his temporary dwelling place, which is sometimes

It is customary in the East to pitch tents near water-springs or fountains. A custom also prevailed, and still prevails in the East, of sitting by the rivers, or cool streams, to meditate or confer together: "By the rivers of Babylon we sat down," says the Psalmist: so the servants of David, and others, went out and met together by the pool of Gibeon; "and they sat down, the one on the one side of the pool, and the other on the other side of the pool."—2 Sam. ii. 13.

On several of the medals of Judea, the daughter of Zion is represented as sitting under a palm tree, in a mournful attitude.

In traversing the land of Judea we dwell on the history of the past; the inquiring mind would know each particular, however minute, descriptive of the local manners and customs of the people who once inhabited these remarkable regions. We recall to mind, also, the important scenes which were witnessed here, and the conduct of those who were the actors in those scenes. To the pious Christian, whose affections are bound to Palestine by the strongest associations, every fact is interesting which illustrates the early annals of

entirely covered with silk, besides being lined with a stuff of the same material. A recent traveller mentions one that cost twenty-five thousand piastres, and was not finished in less than three years: it was lined with a single piece made of camel's hair, and beautifully decorated with festoons, and sentences in the Turkish language. Scarlet broadcloth covered the outside of another, which was lined within with violet-colored satin, ornamented with a great variety of animals, flowers, &c., formed entirely of pearls and precious stones. This was the tent of the sumptuous Nadir Shah. The custom of setting apart tents for the use of the women, is still in use; the common Arabs have a separate apartment in their tents for their wives, made by letting down a curtain or carpet from one of the pillars. The part of the tent thus appropriated is called harem; and no stranger is permitted to enter it unless introduced. Tents in ancient times, were also appropriated to different sexes, as illustrated by Mr. Taylor: Sarah had her tent; Laban went into Jacob's tent. Leah's tent, Rachel's tent, and the maid-servant's tent are also particularized. Sisera fled to Jael's tent; hence, perhaps, her hope of greater security in the harem of Heber, Jael's husband: "Howbeit, Sisera fled away on his feet to the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite; for there was peace between Jabin, the king of Hazor, and the house of Heber the Kenite."—Judges iv. 17.

his religion. In his eyes, as truly remarked, every portion of the hill country of Judea, its mountains, its lakes, and even its deserts, are revered as the scene of some mighty event. To him no description could be too minute, no details could be too particular.

After the fatigues of a toilsome travel we sat down to our homely fare with a zest which an earned appetite knows how to enjoy. With the remaining fragments of our provision basket, we contrived to push off an hour of social merriment. As midnight was creeping on, each hied to his blanket for a short repose. The blaze of our cooking utensils and the smell of the feast, had attracted the tenants of the forest, whose echoing yells filled the air in all directions. The light of a clear full moon occasionally gave us a glimpse of our nocturnal visitors, who frequently came near us, and at times seemed to surround us. Their mingled cries resounded through the solitudes until daybreak. Some traveller, who was regaled with the midnight yell of savage beasts, calls it the music of the desert; a serenade of wolves and hyænas at such an hour, and in such a place, associates in our mind any idea but that of music.* More than one of the party were of our opinion, judging from the preparations for encountering the enemy, in case of attack. Our donkeys, as if conscious of approaching danger, more than once sounded the note of

* It has been remarked, as being somewhat singular, that a creature so well known in the East as the hyæna is, should be so seldom mentioned in Scripture. It is understood to be named in two places only: in the first of Samuel, eighteenth chapter, eighteenth verse, we read of "the valley of Zebaim," which has been rendered to mean, "the valley of the hyænas." The "speckled bird," referred to in Jeremiah, twelfth chapter, ninth verse, the Septuagint render by "the cave of hyæna." The early translators took this "bird," of the modern versions, for a beast, and that beast the hyæna. A recent traveller informs us, this animal is well known at Aleppo; lives in the hills at no great distance from the town; and is held in great horror; is the size of a large dog, and remarkably striped, or streaked; has much similitude to the wolf in nature and form; but has only four toes on each foot, in which he is very singular. He is extremely wild, sullen, and ferocious; will sometimes attack men; rushes with great fury on flocks and cattle; ransacks graves; devours dead bodies; is untamable.

alarm, a din sufficient to frighten the very echoes, and drive any beast of prey to his hiding hole.

De la Roque, in his travels through Palestine, heard the cries of the wild beasts which infested the neighborhood of his solitary route. The close thickets along the edge of the Jordan, as well as the lower plain, afford ample shelter for wild boars, ounces, and jackals. Lions not only abounded in the thickets of the river just named, but in Lebanon, and in other places in Canaan, where there were woods. When the Jordan was swollen with rain, and its banks overflowed, the lions were driven out from the inundation, which gave rise to the simile of the prophet : " Behold he shall come up like a lion from the swelling of the Jordan, against the habitation of the strong."—Jer. xlix. 19.

At early dawn we recommenced our journey, and shortly arrived in view of Damascus, the paradise of the East, whose appearance in distance has been compared to a beautiful city in the midst of a vast wood. About two miles distant from the immense plain beneath, we stood upon an elevation, considered the best point to view the city to advantage. It was from this height, so says tradition, that Mahomet first saw Damascus, whose prospects so abounded in charms, and earthly delights, that he turned his face from beholding the scene, and would not enter the city. There was but one paradise designed for man, he said, and he was resolved not to have his in this world. In commemoration of this incident in the life of the prophet, a small marble structure was erected upon the summit, and called by the Arabs the Arch of Victory. If the prophet beheld Damascus from this elevation, there is nothing incredible in the story. He here saw the eden of the East open before him in all its voluptuous beauty. It was indeed no common test of virtue, if, from a principle of self-denial, he resisted the temptation to enter its gates.

LETTER XLII.

Charms of Eastern scenery,—Sunset along the hills of Judea,—Precipitous and narrow road,—Characteristics of the donkey and the mule,—Sagacity of the mule in descending dangerous precipices,—Superior breed of asses rode by Hebrew princes in the days of Deborah,—The para extolled in the book of Job, held in high esteem among the Persians and Tartars, preferred for docility and speed to the finest breed of horses,—Two wild asses pursued in the chase, valued for their breed, from their high price excluded from the purchase of the commonalty,—Christ's triumphant entry into Jerusalem upon an ass, marked him as the debased king of Israel, different opinions on that subject,—Asses of Cairo, rode by the Mahomedans, and most distinguished women of the country,—Road to Damascus,—Arrival in that city,—Incident,—Convent of the Latin monks,—Fruits, wines, &c., of the country,—Sleeping apartment,—Table in European style,—Entertainment of English travellers at the table of the Pacha of Egypt, his adherence to the customs of the East,—Caravanserais built within the precincts of the city, supplied with mats only,—Travelling equipage of the Orientals, contrived in the most simple and portable form,—People of the East more advanced than Europeans in the art of dispensing with many things, an art not without its use,—Caravanseraï, expressed in the Scriptures by the term Inn,—Place of the Saviour's birth,—Passage from Luke,—Good Samaritan,—Illustration from Scripture.

THE elevation from which we beheld the city of Damascus is about fifteen hundred feet from the level of the sea. The effect of the view from this height, as truly said, is derived from the verdure of foliage, varying from the deepest shade to the lightest tint of green, together with the bright sun and cloudless sky, that light up the scenery of the Eastern world; and diffuse throughout the landscape a charm unknown in countries where a dense and hazy atmosphere prevails. The lines descriptive of a sunset scene along the hills of the Morea, will apply with equal truth to the glorious sunset that lights up the skies of the Eastern world—

“So sinks, more lovely ere his race be run,
Along *Judea's* hills the setting sun;
Not as in northern climes, obscurely bright,
But one unclouded blaze of living light!”

The road leading from the high grounds to the plains of Damascus is precipitous, and in many places narrow and somewhat hazardous to pass. Our donkeys bore us very cautiously along, instinctively choosing the surest foothold and the smoothest path, which they never mistake if the choice is left to them, and they are allowed to go their own way.

Though no picturesque object himself, the donkey is often preferred to the saddle horse; the former is surer-footed, and better able to stand fatigue. The mules are also strong and sure-footed, but extremely vicious, and with a sagacity truly surprising. They sometimes take a frolic of galloping with their rider down a steep hill to the brink of a dangerous precipice. But their cunning is not limited to these tricks; they will edge you, as Armstrong says, to the roughest part of the road, to have an excuse to go softly, or move to the fence wall by degrees, and entertain themselves with rubbing you against the stones; and if a stirrup slips off, or the bridle escapes from your hand, they quickly seize the opportunity, and use a thousand manœuvres to dismount you; so that you are obliged to be constantly on the watch to keep your seat.*

The animal which we rode on the present route was of the common class of berricoes, ill-shaped, obstinate, and slow; one that would ne'er mend his pace with beating. A far superior breed of asses is found among the wealthier classes,

* The steep precipices descending the Alps can only be travelled by the mule. These animals after having been long used in such perilous descents, acquire a reputation for safety, and their value rises in proportion to their celebrity. For this reason the mules were held in high estimation in Palestine. An account of their instinctive cautiousness in descending dangerous steeps is given by a late traveller, in his journey crossing the Alps: When they come to the edge of one of the precipices, they stop without being checked by the rider, and if he attempts to spur them on they continue immovable. They seem all this time to be ruminating on the peril that lies before them. They not only attentively view the road, but tremble and snort at the danger. After preparing themselves for descent, they slide down swiftly with the rider, who has nothing to do but keep fast on the saddle without checking the reins, for the least motion would disturb the equilibrium of the mule, in which case both he and his rider would be dashed to pieces.—*Script. Nat. Hist.*

who keep them as luxuries. These fine animals are probably the descendants of those that were anciently used by people of rank in Palestine, and praised for their swiftness, beauty, and strength.*

* We read in Judges, that people of the first quality rode on asses in Palestine: "Speak, ye that ride on white asses, ye that sit in judgment, and walk by the way." "And he had thirty sons that rode on thirty asses," &c. "And he had forty sons and thirty nephews, that rode on three score and ten ass colts, and he judged Israel eight years."—Judges v. 10; x. 4; xii. 14. The wild ass is of silvery white: on such the Hebrew princes rode in the days of Deborah. The wild ass, as already mentioned, is often noticed in Scripture, and was once well known in the eastern countries. The para, extolled in the book of Job, is held in high esteem among the Persians and the Tartar hordes, and preferred for its docility and speed to the most valuable breed of horses. He is much better formed, and more dignified than the common ass; an old writer describes him as handsome, large, vigorous, of stately gait, and his coat of a silvery color, having a black band about the spine of the back; and on his flanks patches as white as snow. We gave chase to two wild asses, says the author of a Journey in Persia, which had so much the speed of our horses, that when they had got at some distance they stood still and looked behind at us, snorting with their noses in the air as if in contempt of our endeavors to catch them. The wild ass, if possible, is taken alive, for the purpose of obtaining the breed, which is highly valued by the great men of the East. In fact, the high price of these asses excludes them from the purchase of the commonalty, and restricts the possession of them to the great or affluent. It has been remarked, however honorable asses might be among the Jews before the days of David, or in more modern times among the lawyers of Persia; yet, in the days of our Saviour they were not in much more respect than among us at present; therefore, his riding upon one in his triumphant entry into Jerusalem marked him as the debased king of Israel. There are different opinions among commentators on this subject. In order to accomplish a prophecy of Zechariah, ninth chapter, and ninth verse, our Saviour rode on an ass into Jerusalem in a triumphant manner. This has been made a subject of ridicule by some: in reply to this it has been observed that this action of our Lord is to be viewed not only as an accomplishment of a prophecy, but also as a revival of an ancient and venerable Hebrew custom. The kind of ass on which our Lord rode to Jerusalem has been made a subject of question among the learned. Dr. Doddridge observes that our Lord's triumphant entry was not degraded by indignity; though humble, it was not mean. Much of that extreme meanness which some have found in the character and situation of Jesus arises from their imperfect acquaintance with local customs and manners, and is greatly diminished on closer inspection; for however humble might be his appearance, yet it was neither vulgar nor mean. Christians cannot repine, says Niebuhr, at being forbidden to ride on horseback in the streets of Cairo, for the asses are there

The road leading to Damascus was thickly covered with a fine powdered dust, which was soon set in motion, and filled the air nearly to suffocation.

Our appearance as we entered the city attracted no little curiosity. We met with no interruption, although strangers known to be Christians have sometimes been treated with rudeness. An American traveller,* whom we encountered in another direction, met with a less friendly reception. He arrived at Damascus attended by a single guide; as he entered the thoroughfare, or the street called Straight, he was saluted with a shower of stones, and narrowly escaped with life. He was confined some days from the injuries received; it was useless to complain, for what redress could be obtained at a tribunal composed of judges who think it a merit to take the life of a Christian? The only sign of insult which crossed us on our first appearance, occurred at the entrance of the bazaars, as we approached a motley tribe of buyers and sellers. A very pretty, modest looking girl, observing our strange habits, and unturbaned heads, very innocently concluded that we were infidel dogs, and no true followers of the prophet, for which unpardonable sin she bestowed on us a look of ineffable contempt, and distorting her pretty little mouth, she gave vent to her indignation by spitting at us!

We took up our quarters at the convent of the Latin monks, a place provided for the reception of merchants and travellers who visit the city. Here we were lodged, and supplied with meats, excellent bread, fruits, and the wines of the country; the melon and grape were delicious. Among the luxuries was the water, pure as a diamond spark, and cold as the icicle. The whole furniture of our sleeping room consisted of an antique empty book-case, and a straw bed already in posses-

very handsome; and are used for riding, by the greater part of the Mahomedans, and by the most distinguished women of the country. The asses with which we were supplied in our excursion in the neighborhood of Alexandria, though small in size, were quite handsome, and remarkably easy with the saddle.

* Mr. Langdon of Boston.

sion of other tenants. On the walls were written in pencil marks, the names of Burckhardt, Buckingham, and other travellers, who had quartered at the convent.

Wooden benches served for seats, and we sat at a dining table spread something after the European style, and furnished with knife and fork ; conveniences rarely found where fingers are used as substitutes. Mahomet Ali still adheres to the customs of the East : knives, forks, and other useful appendages never make their appearance at his meals. About five years ago, says Mr. Carne, some English travellers were graciously received by the Pacha, and pressingly invited to dine. But not even in compliance with the taste of his guest would he depart from his own habits ; for, wishing to show a noble lady particular attention, he took a large piece of meat in his hand, and politely placed it before her. Perfectly dismayed at the compliment, and the sight of the savory morsel which rested on her plate, she turned to her companion, who was more used to oriental manners, and earnestly asked what she was to do. " Eat it, to be sure," was the reply. She looked at the pacha, his fine dark eyes appeared to rest on her with a most kind and complacent expression, and there was no help for it but to follow the excellent advice given her by her more experienced friend.*

At the caravanserais, or khans, which are usually built out of the precincts of the city, the traveller is supplied with a bare mat only, the rest he provides himself ; he therefore usually carries with him his bed, his kitchen utensils, and even his provisions ; for frequently the necessary article of bread is not to be found in the villages. On this account, as Volney says, the Orientals contrive their equipage in the most simple and portable form, and are provided with every article for culinary purposes. They are more advanced than we in the art of dispensing with many things, an art which is not without its use. European merchants are not contented with such simple accommodations.

* Recollections of the East.

The caravanserai in the East is a building which is expressed in the Scriptures by the term Inn, a place open to all comers. In the manger of such a place,—“the place of untying” of beasts, there being no room in the inn,—the Saviour was born: “And she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.”—Luke ii. 7.

To such an asylum for the wayfaring man the good Samaritan conducted the wounded traveller: “But a good Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was; and when he saw him he had compassion on him, and went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.”—Luke x. 33, 34.

LETTER XLIII.

Via Recta, or the street called Straight,—**Bazaars**,—**Merchandize** brought by pilgrims,—**Damascus** chiefly indebted to the travelling devotees for its present flourishing condition,—**Caravans** joined by travellers for safe convey,—**Pilgrimage** to the city of the Prophet a journey of spiritual and worldly benefit,—**Damascus** the chief centre of the caravan trade,—**Port of Mecca** the great depot of the goods of India,—**Journey** of forty days to Mecca and as many back,—**Mode** of travelling adopted by the caravans,—**Rules** and regulations by which the mixed multitude are governed in marching through the desert,—**The** embodying a caravan, a serious affair, never attempted without permission of the authorities of the place where it is formed,—**Principal** officers of the caravan, duties assigned to them,—**Light** and heavy caravans,—**Support** of the escort in case of an attack,—**Passengers** not obliged to fight,—**Day** fixed for the setting out never delayed,—**Caravans** waylaid and robbed,—**Carriages** and elephants unknown at the present day in Syria, anciently used by the kings of that country,—**Illustrations** from Scripture,—**History** of the **Exodus** elucidated,—**Accuracy** of the Scriptures proved by the narratives of modern travellers,—**Localities** in and about Damascus,—**Places** associated with events mentioned in Scripture, pointed out in the city and neighborhood of Damascus,—**Paul** restored to sight,—**Ananias** commanded to find out the apostle and to cure his blindness,—**Illustration** from Scripture,—**Window** through which Paul made his escape,—**The** Jews, unable to bear the growing progress of Christianity under the eloquent appeals of Paul, resolve to put him to death,—**Place** of Paul's baptism,—**Spot** where the apostle was arrested in his course by the light from heaven,—**Illustrations** from Scripture,—**Charms** of association.

THE *Via Recta*, or the street called Straight mentioned in Acts, extends about a league in length, running in a direct line from east to west through the city of Damascus. The bazaars on either side exhibit a long array of shops filled with the merchandize of India and of Europe, brought by the pilgrims who centre at this grand mart, whence, uniting in a body, they proceed to Mecca, their point of destination.

The present flourishing condition of Damascus is attributed chiefly to the army of pilgrims who yearly gather in the city. When the period arrives for the departure of the numerous company of devotees,—sometimes to the number of fifty

thousand,—they set out punctually at the appointed time to cross the desert, escorting on their march various travellers who join the caravan for convenience or safe convoy. Led by interest and devotion they point their course for the city of the Prophet, a journey of forty days and as many back. Each of this army of pilgrims, in order to receive some worldly as well spiritual benefit from his journey, loads his camel or his mule with the productions of his own country, which he disposes of on his route, and returns freighted with the goods of India, of which Jedda, the port of Mecca, is the great depot. Thus this immense caravan engrosses to itself the trade of the countries through which it passes; and of all this trade Damascus is the centre, and, together with Aleppo, derives considerable advantage from it.

An English officer, in a tour to India, gives a minute account of the mode of travelling adopted by the caravans in the East. To those unacquainted with the rules and regulations which govern these mixed multitudes marching in a body through the deserts, and places infested with robbers, a few extracts from the traveller referred to will not be uninteresting. As the account given of the movements of the caravan is thought to illustrate the early history of the customs of the East, its introduction here will not be considered out of place.

The embodying of a caravan is concerted with great care and preparation; and as the collection of such a number of persons is a matter of no small import, it is never attempted without permission of the authorities in whose dominions it is formed, and of those also it is to pass, expressed in writing. The exact number of men and carriages, mules, horses, and other beasts of burden, is specified in the license; and the merchants to whom the caravan belongs regulate and direct everything appertaining to its government and police, during the journey, and appoint the various officers necessary for conducting it.

Each caravan has four principal officers: the caravan

Bachi, or head of the caravan ; the captain of the March ; the captain of the Stop, or Rest ; and the captain of Distribution. The first has the uncontrollable authority and command over all the others, and gives them his orders ; the second is absolute during the march ; but his authority immediately ceases on the stopping, or encamping of the caravan, when the third assumes his share of authority, and exerts it during the remaining at rest ; and the fourth orders the disposition of every part of the caravan, in case of an attack or battle. This last officer has also, during the march, the inspection and direction of the distribution of provisions, which is conducted under his management, by several inferior officers, who are obliged to give security to the master of the caravan ; each of them having the care of a certain number of men, elephants, dromedaries, camels, &c., which they undertake to conduct, and to furnish with provisions at their own risk according to an agreement stipulated between them. A fifth officer of the caravan is the paymaster or treasurer, who has under him a great many clerks, or interpreters, appointed to keep accurate journals of all the material incidents that may occur on the journey ; and it is by these journals, signed by the superior officers, that the owners of the caravan judge whether they have been well or ill served or conducted. Another kind of officers are Mathematicians, without whom no caravan will presume to set out. There are commonly three of them attached to the caravan of a large size ; and they perform the offices both of quarter-master and aides-de-camp, leading the troops when the caravan is attacked, and assigning the quarters where the caravan is appointed to encamp.

The writer of this account informs us that there are no less than five distinct kinds of caravans : those of the heavy class, composed of elephants, dromedaries, camels, and horses ; the light caravans, which have but few elephants ; the common caravans, where are none of those animals ; the horse caravans, where there are neither dromedaries nor camels ; and lastly, sea caravans, consisting of vessels ; hence, the word

caravan is not confined to the land, but extends to the water also. The escort is composed of four thousand men on horseback. Two men are required for leading one elephant, five for three dromedaries, and seven for eleven camels. This multitude of servants, together with the officers and passengers, whose number is uncertain, serve to support the escort in case of a fight; and render the caravan more formidable and secure. The passengers are not absolutely obliged to fight; but according to laws and usages of the caravans, if they refuse to do so, they are not entitled to any provisions whatever from the caravan, even though they should agree to pay an extravagant price for them.

That no disappointment can possibly ensue, the day fixed for the setting out of the caravan is never delayed. Even these powerful and well-armed bodies, we are told, are waylaid and robbed by the Arabian princes, who keep spies in all parts to give notice when the caravan sets out; sometimes they plunder them, sometimes they make slaves of the whole convoy.*

It will be seen that the description here given of the well-armed and powerful bodies crossing the deserts refers to the caravans in India, as carriages and elephants are unknown in Syria at the present day. It appears, however, that elephants were anciently used by the kings of Judea. We read in the books of Maccabees, that an army of one hundred thousand foot, twenty thousand horse, and thirty elephants, was led against Judea; the blood of grapes and mulberries was shown to them for the purpose of animating them to the combat, and to accustom them to the sight of blood. It was usual to intoxicate them with wine mixed with incense, with the design that they should crush the Hebrews to death under their feet.—3 Mac. v.

The account of the convoy across the deserts, as just intimated, is thought to have very materially assisted in illustrating the history of the Exodus, and has been applied to

* Campbell's Travels to India.

that event, by showing that the manners of the East have ever been so permanent, that what was anciently adopted into a custom is still conformed to with scarcely any variation. A learned commentator, after comparing the modern with the ancient customs of the Oriental nations, and proving the accuracy of the Scriptures from the testimony furnished by the narrative of travellers, remarks that the most intricate transactions appear plain, when set in their proper light; and that what we now find obscure, is so evidently, not from any real obscurity in the original narration, but from our imperfect knowledge of the subject to which it refers.

We now invite the reader to accompany us on a visit to a few of the most interesting localities in and about Damascus. Various places associated with events mentioned in Scripture are pointed out in the city and its neighborhood. In the Via Recta the house of Judas is shown where Paul resided when he was restored to sight; and the tomb of Ananias, a disciple of Christ, whom the Lord commanded to find out Paul, to lay his hands on him, and to cure his blindness: "And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; to him said the Lord, in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold I am here, Lord. And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul of Tarsus; for behold, he prayeth. * * * And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house, and putting his hands on him, said, Brother Saul, the Lord, (even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest,) hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight; and be filled with the Holy Ghost."—Acts ix. 10, 11—17.

In the parapet of a lofty wall, near the eastern gate of the city, is an opening, through which Paul made his escape from the Jews who had taken council to kill him. From this port-hole, or window, we are told, the apostle was let down in a basket, as chronicled in Acts: "Then the disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall, in a basket."—Acts ix. 25.

Previous to this event, Paul went into Arabia, probably in the neighborhood of Damascus. His escape happened in the third year after his arrival in that city. The Jews, unable to bear the growing progress of Christianity under the eloquent appeals of the apostle, resolved to put him to death; but he was delivered from the hands of his enemies in the manner described in the passage just cited.

In the neighborhood of the eastern gate of the city is a fountain which is approached with great reverence by all devout pilgrims, in the belief that the spring supplied the water with which Paul was baptized; it is drank by the Christians in remembrance of that event. On the ancient road to Jerusalem, near Damascus, the spot is pointed out where Paul was arrested in his course by the great light from heaven which encompassed him and his companions. How eloquent are the apostle's own words: "Whereupon, as I went to Damascus, with authority and commission from the chief priests, at mid-day, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me. And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?"—Acts xxvi. 12, 13.

The place of Paul's vision and miraculous conversion is about half a mile eastward of the city. We fancied that we stood upon the spot where the apostle saw the light from heaven that shone round about him, and where he heard the voice that bade him "Arise," and go into the city, where it should be told him what he had to do: "And he, trembling and astonished, said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do."—Acts ix. 6.

LETTER XLIV.

Localities of Damascus well authenticated,—Chief error of Monkish guides,—Changes in the aspect of Jerusalem,—Ancient travellers not obliged to enter into critical disquisitions,—Traditions and recollections,—Perpetuity of the scenery and manners of Palestine,—Fictions of ignorance and superstition,—Tradition of Abel,—Illustration from Scripture,—Cain's punishment and expulsion from Paradise,—Adam punished by a dying life, Cain by a living death,—Soil of which the body of Adam was formed,—The word Adam derived from Admah, earth,—Living principle infused into Adam, capable of immortality, no inherent seeds of dissolution in him,—Slow poisons,—Motley scenes of Oriental life,—Wares and merchandise exhibited at the bazaars,—Damascus blades, art of manufacturing them lost,—Sabres made of thin lamina of steel and iron,—Manufactured silks important article of trade at Damascus,—Cabinet work,—Workers in silver, gold and hardware,—Sheltered markets,—Idiots and jugglers,—Incident at the Mint,—Courtesy shown the American officers while at Damascus.

Most of the localities pointed out in Damascus and hal-
lowed by tradition are considered to be well authenticated.
Some are no doubt the inventions of ignorance and superstition. Damascus, unlike the city of Jerusalem, exhibits few
memorials associated with events recorded in the sacred volume, and venerated by the pious pilgrim.

The anxiety to exhibit everything to which any allusion is made in the Scriptures is the chief error of the monkish guides; not remembering, as Dr. Clarke says, that the lapse of ages and the devastation of successive wars have destroyed much, and disfigured more, which the early disciples could most readily identify.*

* Dr. Clarke would have his readers recollect that in the course of so many ages during which Jerusalem has existed, the buildings, their foundations, repairs, and alterations, the sieges which the city has suffered, its repeated conflagrations, and its numerous changes both public and private, have so altered the site, the declivities and the risings on which it stands, that probably neither Herod nor Caiaphas, and certainly neither David nor Solomon, could they now inspect it, would recollect the very ground on

The ancient travellers in Judea were considered fortunate in not being obliged to enter into critical disquisitions of little importance to the reader; in the first place, because they found that religion never contends against truth; and secondly, because every mind was convinced that the only way to see a country as it is, must be to see it with all its traditions and recollections.*

Every traveller should visit the Holy Land with the Bible as his guide. Judea, as said before, is not worth our going so far to examine it, if we are determined to carry with us a spirit of cavil and contradiction. We agree in the remark, that there is in the scenery and manners of Palestine a perpetuity that accords well with the everlasting import of its historical records, and which enables us to identify with the utmost readiness the local imagery of every great transaction.

Among the noted localities in the vicinity of Damascus is a plain where tradition says Abel was murdered; about three leagues from Damascus, on the road to Baälbec, his tomb is shown amidst a mass of antediluvian remains.† In a meadow, in this direction, a red soil is found, of which they say the body of Adam was originally formed. Here, says the legend, the divine Spirit first breathed into the nostrils

which the palaces stood, or which they labored to honor and adorn; always excepting the temple.

* Chateaubriand, *Itinéraire*.

† Attention is called to the fact that, in our translations, no mention is made of Cain inviting his brother into the field: "And Cain talked with Abel his brother; and it came to pass, that when they were in the field that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him."—Gen. iv. 8.

On the subject of Cain's punishment and expulsion from Paradise an able writer has the following comment: "Crimes, in general, have been thought by mankind susceptible of expiation, more or less, according to the degrees of their guilt; but some are of so flagrant a nature as to be supposed atrocious beyond expiation. Though murder be considered as one of those atrocious crimes, and consequently inexpiable, yet there have been instances wherein the criminal was punished by other means than by loss of life. A judicial infliction, of a commutatory kind, seems to have been passed on Cain.—Adam was punished by a dying life; Cain by a living death."

of man the breath of life, and here Adam became a living soul ! *

The bazaars at Damascus exhibit a motley scene of Oriental life. Each shop is furnished with its own commodities, or particular wares and merchandise belonging to itself. Caps, embroidered jackets, and turbans in one ; slippers, shoes, and the like in another ; in a third coins, trinkets, antiques, and so on. Here manufactured silks of every color and figure tempt the purchaser ; there pipes of long dimensions, choice tobacco, and decorated amber mouth-pieces draw crowds of customers. On this side are bridles and sumptuous horse-trappings ; on that, ataghans, silver-mounted guns, and Damascus blades of true temper and keen edge. These blades of the veritable steel are valued for their flexibility, are scarce, and command high prices.

The art of manufacturing the Damascus blades was lost when Tamerlane took with him the artisans to Persia. The sabres, once so famous, are said to have been made of thin lamina of steel and iron welded together, so as to unite great flexibility with a keen edge. Blades are still made at Damascus, but of a very inferior quality ; they are base imitations, and frequently sold to strangers in shape of dirks, swords,

* "Adam became a living soul," by which we understand a living person ; because such is the import of the original, simply taken. If the word Adam be derived from Admah, earth, it might have been said, according to this idea, "the earth, Adam, became alive."

It is very credible, adds the author of this remark, that it implies some real distinction between the nature of the living principle, or soul, not spirit, in Adam, and that of animals. May we suppose that this principle, thus especially imparted by God, was capable of immortality ; that, however the beasts might die by nature, man would survive by nature ? that he had no inherent seeds of dissolution in him, but that his dissolution was the consequence of his sin, and the execution of the threatening, "dying thou shalt die ? Speaking of the nature of the living principle infused into Adam, who lived a thousand years after eating the fruit, which probably poisoned his blood, it has been asked, how much longer might he not have lived, had that poison never been taken by him ? Poisons are said to exist which operate slowly and gradually, lasting for many years ; "a lingering mortality ! an incessant death !"

knives, and the like. The manufactured silks, with a mixture of cotton, form an important article of trade; the texture is usually interwoven with sentences taken from the Koran. The cabinet work of fine wood, adorned with ivory and mother of pearl, exhibits beautiful specimens of skill in the mechanic arts, and has justly excited the admiration of all travellers.

In the largest bazaars may be seen workers in silver and gold, and the manufacturers of hardware. The numerous artisans were busy at their different trades; the sound of hammers rang in every direction, resembling the din of a brass foundry.

The bazaars are so many sheltered markets constructed of hewn stone, and well lighted by openings pierced at regular distances in the roof; here you occasionally encounter the mountebank auctioneer, with his stock in trade hanging at his back. This fellow derives his consequence from his volubility. There is another class of idlers who mix in the crowd, assuming to be prophets; these, of course, have their followers. Some affect to be idiots, and keep from starving by playing the fool. The jugglers are expert at their trade, and are exceeded nowhere in feats of strength, and tricks of legerdemain.

A simple incident will serve to show that a marked trait in the Turkish character is fondness for slight of hand. One of our party, while watching the operations of the workmen at the Mint, was accosted by one of them and charged with having pocketed a piece of his coin. The person accused, of course, stoutly denied having touched anything, when the man of the Mint laughed, and asked him to feel in his pockets; he did so, and to his no small surprise found a piece of gold which had been but that moment thrown from the die. The rogue was much diverted at this act of his adroitness.

A few weeks preceding our arrival, a party from the ship had visited Damascus, where, as before mentioned, they found that letters from Mahomet Ali were already in the hands of

the Sheriffe pasha, with instructions to receive the American officers, and to make them welcome as visitors and friends. This was accordingly done. We noticed the entertainment provided at the palace of the pacha and the marked attentions on the part of that officer towards the party to make their stay acceptable while at Damascus.

LETTER XLV.

Slave-market at Damascus,—Critical examination of a slave by his intended bidder,—Slaves held and owned among the ancient nations of the East,—Servant in Scripture synonymous with slave, the word servant used to denote a man who voluntarily dedicates himself to the service of another,—Several ways by which a Hebrew may fall into slavery,—Mosaic law concerning Hebrew servants,—Servants who renounced the privilege of freedom,—Hebrew festival or year of Jubilee,—Illustration from Scripture,—Seven Sabbaths of years,—Observances during the jubilee year,—Slaves declared free at the sound of the trumpet,—Law preventing the rich from oppressing the poor,—Intention of Moses to preserve as much as possible the rights of all,—Sabbatical year annulled debts which the Jubilee did not,—Slaves restored to their liberty and lands to their owners,—Slaves set free at the death of their masters,—Practice of piercing the ear with an awl,—Jews never in bondage to any man,—True children of Abraham,—Abraham said to have reigned in Damascus,—Eliezer the steward of Abraham,—Traditions,—Abraham's steward purchased as a slave, restored to liberty and promoted by his master,—Remote antiquity of Damascus,—Founder of the city, called by the Arabs el Sham,—Population of Damascus.

AMONG the vendibles exposed at the public market-place at Damascus are the women of Circassia, who, like other matters of barter and trade, are offered for sale, and become the property of the highest bidder. The traffickers in flesh and blood gather at the slave market, and purchase human beings as they would barter for a horse, or any other animal. No creature of the bestial race is examined with more critical minuteness than is a slave by his intended bidder. The picture of a slave market in Constantinople is a sketch from the life: the intended bidders minutely examine the poor creatures

merely to ascertain their qualities as animals, select the sleek-est and best-conditioned from the different groups ; and, besides handling and examining their make and size, subject their mouth, their teeth, and whatever chiefly engages attention, to a scrutiny of the most critical description. The poet tells the same story, in his account of a Turkish slave market :—

“ Just now a black old neutral personage
 Of the third sex stept up, and peering over
 The captives, seem'd to mark their looks and age,
 And capabilities, as to discover
 If they were fitted for the purposed cage.
 * * * * *
 The eunuch, having eyed them o'er with care,
 Turned to the merchant, and began to bid
 First but for one, and after for the pair ;
 They haggled, wrangled, swore too,—so they did !
 As though they were in a mere Christian fair,
 Cheap'ning an ox, an ass, a lamb, or kid ;
 So that their bargain sounded like a battle
 For this superior yoke of human cattle.”

It appears that slaves were held and owned among the ancient nations of the East. The Hebrews had foreign slaves obtained by capture, purchase, or born in the house. Over these the masters or owners had unlimited authority ; they might sell them, exchange them, punish them, judge them, and even put them to death without public process.

Generally speaking, a servant in Scripture is supposed to signify a slave, because, among the Hebrews and the neighboring nations, the greater part of the servants were such, belonging to their masters who had a right to dispose of their persons, goods, and in some cases of their lives. In a scriptural sense the word servant is sometimes used to denote a man who voluntarily dedicates himself to the service of another. The servants of Saul and of David are said to have been their subjects in general ; and their domestics in particular.

A Hebrew, as illustrated by a learned commentator, might fall into slavery several ways : first, if reduced to extreme

poverty he might sell himself; second, a father might sell his children as slaves; third, insolvent debtors might be delivered to their creditors as slaves; fourth, thieves, not being able to make restitution for their thefts or the value, were sold for the benefit of the sufferers; fifth, they might be taken prisoners in war; sixth, they might be stolen, and afterwards sold as slaves, as Joseph was stolen by his brethren; seventh, a Hebrew slave redeemed from a Gentile by one of his brethren might be sold by him to another Israelite.

In the Mosaic law there are regulations concerning the Hebrew slaves, or servants, who were the property of their masters: "If thou buy an Hebrew servant, six years he shall serve, and in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing. If he came in by himself, he shall go out by himself: if he were married, then his wife shall go out with him. If his master have given him a wife, and she have borne him sons and daughters, the wife and her children shall be her master's, and he shall go out by himself. And if the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free: then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door-post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an awl; and he shall serve him forever."—Exodus xxi. 2—6.

The servant who renounced the privilege of freedom on the sabbatical year, was subjected to this mark, in the presence of the judges, and he shall serve his master forever; or, according to the commentators, till the year of jubilee; for then all slaves, without exception, recovered their liberty.*

* The Hebrew festival or the year of Jubilee occurred after seven weeks of years, or seven times seven years, as mentioned in Leviticus: "And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty through all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his own family."—Lev. xxv. 10.

Several commentators, however, maintain that it was celebrated in the forty-ninth year, the last year of the seventh week of the year, and Leviticus xxv. 8, favors this opinion: "And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years

According to some authorities, slaves were set free also at the death of their masters, and did not descend to their heirs. The practice of piercing the ear with an awl continued in Syria to the time of Juvenal, who refers to it in the first book of his *Satires*.

In the eighth chapter of John, thirty-third verse, we read of the Jews that they were "never in bondage to any man;" by which it appears that the descendants of Abraham always valued themselves on their liberty. The true children of Abraham were born of free mothers, an honor which they claimed to themselves in opposition to the race of Ishmael, born of a mother who was a slave. Paul, in his Epistle to the Galatians, says: "So then, brethren, we are not children of the bond-woman, but of the free."—Gal. iv. 31.

unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years."

During the jubilee year no one either sowed or reaped; but all were satisfied with what the earth and the trees produced spontaneously. Each resumed possession of his inheritance, whether it were sold, mortgaged, or alienated; and Hebrew slaves of every description were set free, with their wives and children. The first nine days were spent in festivity, during which no one worked, and every one put a crown on his head. On the tenth day, which was the day of solemn expiation, the Sanhedrim ordered the trumpets to sound, and instantly the slaves were declared free, and the lands returned to their hereditary owners.

This law, as justly remarked, was mercifully designed to prevent the rich from oppressing the poor, and reducing them to perpetual slavery; and also to prevent their getting possession of all the lands by purchase, mortgage or usurpation; that debts should not be multiplied too much; and that slaves should not continue, with their wives and children, in perpetual bondage. Besides, Moses intended to preserve as much as possible, the liberty of persons, a due proportion of fortunes, and the order of families; as well as that the people should be bound to their country, their lands and inheritances; and that they should cherish an affection for them, as estates descended from their ancestors, and designed for their prosperity.

Several privileges are also noticed as belonging to the jubilee year which did not belong to the sabbatical year; though the latter had some advantages above the former. The sabbatical year annulled debts which the jubilee did not; but the jubilee restored slaves to their liberty, and lands to their owners; besides which, it made restitution of the lands immediately on the beginning of the jubilee; whereas, in the sabbatical year, debts were not discharged till its close. Houses, and other edifices built in walled towns, did not return to the proprietor in the jubilee year.

The Hebrews boasted they were never in bondage to any man. They have, however, as correctly remarked, been subject to several princes : to the Egyptians, the Philistines, the Chaldeans, the Grecians, and the Romans. But this is not slavery in the strict sense of the word. But, to return ;—the father of the ancient race of the Hebrews, the patriarch Abraham, is said to have reigned in Damascus ; here, as recorded in Genesis, Eliezer, the steward of the patriarch, was born : “ And Abraham said, Lord God, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus.”—Gen. xv. 2.

The Mussulmans, as we are told, believe Eliezer to have been a black slave, given to Abraham by Nimrod, at the time when he saw him, by virtue of the name of God, walking out of the midst of the flames, into which he had been cast by his orders. Eliezer is supposed to have been a native of Damascus, and to have been purchased as a slave by Abraham, and behaved so well that his master gave him his liberty, and at length promoted him to the superintendence of all his property. From these chronicles may be inferred the remote antiquity of Damascus, which was founded, according to the Jewish historian, by Uz, the son of Aram, and grandson of Shem. The Arabian historians affirm that Abraham was the founder of Damascus, and that the city derived its name from Damasch Eliezer, his steward ; others assert that it was founded and named by Demschak, son of Ham, and grandson of Noah. At the present day it is called by the Arabs el Sham, or Scham, which is also their name for the provincial limits of the city. The population is differently estimated, varying from 100,000 to 150,000, and are considered to be less oppressed by the Pacha than many others within the dominions of the Turk.

LETTER XLVI.

Damascus not mentioned from the days of Abraham till the time of David,—Illustrations from Scripture,—Syrian kingdom of Damascus during the reigns of David and Solomon,—Illustrations from Scripture,—Rezon, master of Damascus, and acknowledged king,—Aid of Arbaces sought against the invaders of Judah,—Illustration from Scripture,—Plunder and captives carried to Damascus,—Ambassadors sent with presents to Arbaces, his march against Damascus, ravages the whole country,—Destruction of Damascus predicted by the prophets Isaiah and Amos,—Illustration from Scripture,—Calamities of the city pointed at by the prophet Zechariah,—Damascus subject to the kings of Assyria until conquered by the Romans, surrendered to the Arabians,—Aretas,—Paul at Damascus during the reign of that prince,—Illustrations from Scripture,—Damascus conquered by the Saracens, besieged by the Crusaders, yields to the Christian forces, taken by Tamerlane, who puts the inhabitants to the sword, retaken by Selim, eminent for its wealth and population, the most important city of all Syria, surrounded by hills,—Beauty of the location of Damascus,—River Pharpar,—Abana,—Naaman the leper,—Illustration from Scripture,—Territory of Damascus, the best watered and most delicious province of all Syria, spoken of by the Arabs with enthusiasm,—Canals and fountains fertilizing for the course of three leagues,—Lake of the Meadow,—Fish and game,—Locations of Paradise.

FROM the days of Abraham until David's time, the Scriptures do not mention the city of Damascus: at the latter period Hadad, king of that city, sending troops to assist Hadadezer, king of Zobah, was defeated with the latter, and subdued by David.* After the aid of Benhadad was implored by Asa, king of Judah, the kings of Damascus were generally called Benhadad; which they assumed as a surname; like the Cæsars of Rome.

According to the book of Kings, it appears the Syrian kingdom of Damascus originated during the reigns of David and Solomon, the city, previous to that period, having been

* "And when the Syrians of Damascus came to succor Hadadezer, king of Zobah, David slew of the Syrians two and twenty thousand men. Then David put garrisons in Syria of Damascus; and the Syrians became servants to David, and brought gifts."—2 Sam. viii. 5, 6.

subject to a king whose residence was at Zobah, a kingdom of Syria, in the neighborhood of Damascus, extending from Libanus to the Orontes.

While David made war against Hadadezer, Rezon, heading a band of robbers, made inroads into the country about Damascus : " And God stirred him up another adversary, Rezon, the son of Eliadah, which fled from his Lord Hadadezer, king of Zobah. And he gathered men unto him, and became captain over a band, when David slew them of Zobah : and they went to Damascus, and dwelt therein, and reigned in Damascus."—1 Kings xi. 23, 24.

Rezon subsequently became master of the city, and was acknowledged king. Whether this was during the reigns of David and Solomon, Rezon being tributary to them, or whether it was not till near the end of Solomon's reign, the commentators have no means of determining.

Damascus continued to be the capital of the Syrian kingdom, or that portion of the country called Damascene, until it fell into the hands of Tiglath-Pileser, or Arbaces king of Assyria, whose aid had been sought against Rezin and Pekah, two kings who had combined to invade Judah : " In those days the Lord began to send against Judah, Rezin the king of Syria, and Pekah the son of Remaliah."—2 Kings xv. 37.

The first year of Ahaz they besieged Jerusalem ; but not being able to take it, they wasted the country around, and withdrew. The year following they returned, and the Lord delivered up to them the army and the country of Ahaz. After this, they separated their troops ; and Rezin carried away much plunder and many captives to Damascus.

Ahaz not finding himself strong enough to withstand the forces of Rezin and Pekah, sent ambassadors with rich presents to Arbaces, to desire his assistance against those kings. Arbaces marched against Damascus, killed Rezin, plundered the city, and sent the inhabitants away captives. Ahaz went to meet the conqueror at Damascus, but Arbaces not being satisfied with the presents of Ahaz, entered Judea and ravaged the whole country.

Damascus was destroyed as predicted by the prophets. "For before the child shall have knowledge to cry, My father, and my mother, the riches of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria shall be taken away before the king of Assyria."—Isaiah viii. 4. "Thus saith the Lord, For three transgressions of Damascus, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof : because they have threshed Gilead with threshing instruments of iron."—Amos i. 3.

The calamities which befell the city at a subsequent period, when conquered by the generals of Alexander the Great, are supposed to be pointed at by the prophet Zechariah, ninth chapter, first verse. Damascus was subject to the kings of Assyria till the Romans took possession of the city, under whose sway it remained until the Arabians became masters of the country. Aretas, a prince of Arabia mentioned in Scripture, reigned in Damascus during the ministry of Paul in that city, and at the period of his persecution by the Jews : "In Damascus, the governor under Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison desirous to apprehend me."—2 Cor. xi. 32.

Damascus continued under the Romans till it fell into the hands of the Eastern conquerors. The subsequent history of the city is given in the following brief outline :—In the beginning of the eighth century it was conquered by the Saracens, and miserably devastated. In 1147, it was besieged by the Crusaders, but not taken ; it yielded to the Christian forces one hundred and twenty-five years afterwards. In 1396 Tamerlane besieged it with a large army, some say a million of men. After a desperate and prolonged resistance, it yielded to his forces ; and, irritated at its obstinate defence, he put its inhabitants to the sword without mercy. Selim took it, A. D. 1517, under whose successors, the Ottoman emperors, it still continues.*

Damascus is considered remarkable as being the only city of equal antiquity which retains to the present day a high

* Calmet's Dictionary.

degree of eminence for its wealth and population. It has felt the revolutions of sieges and wars ; its walls have been razed, and its people put to the sword, or sold as slaves ; it has as often rose from its ruins, and is at the present day not only the wealthiest but the most important city in all Syria.

Damascus is surrounded by hills, enclosed on the west and the north by the mountains of anti-Libanus. The city is situated in a fertile plain shaded by trees, and ornamented with fountains. Its extensive orchards, computed to be thirty miles round, present an immense plain, bright with verdure, and abounding with every variety of fruit.

The Pharpar, which has its fountain in the mountains of Libanus, flows through the city, and keeps the herbage in perpetual freshness. This river, which issues from the clefts of the mountain rocks, branches into three streams ; the largest passes through the city ; the two lesser streams water the gardens in the vicinity, and then re-uniting they continue their course until lost in the sands some twelve or fifteen miles south of the city. This river, which unites with the Abana mentioned in Scripture, is at present called Barrady ; the Abana is also known by that name ; among the Greeks and Romans it was named Chrysorrhoas, as if it flowed with gold. When Naaman the leper was commanded by the prophet Elisha to wash seven times in the Jordan, he replies : " Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel ? may I not wash in them, and be clean ?"—2 Kings v. 12.

The plain in which the city of Damascus is situated is open to the south and east, and shut in towards the west and north by mountains which limit the view at no great distance ; but, in return, a number of rivulets rise from these mountains which render the territory of Damascus the best watered and most delicious province of all Syria. The Arabs, as Volney says, speak of it with enthusiasm, and think they can never sufficiently extol the freshness and verdure of its orchards, the abundance and variety of its fruits, its numerous streams,

and the clearness of its rills and fountains. No city contains so many canals and fountains : each house has one ; and all these waters are furnished by three rivulets or branches of the same river, which, after fertilizing the gardens for a course of three leagues, flow into the hollow of the desert, to the south-east, where they form a morass called the Lake of the Meadow.* This lake, as ascertained by a recent traveller, produces excellent fish, and the copse which surrounds it a great quantity of game. The wonder is, that though it receives the above-mentioned river, and many stray waters besides, yet it never overflows. It is three leagues from Damascus towards the east, ten or twelve leagues long, and five or six broad.

The Persians call Damascus the right hand of the cities of Syria ; they think it has no equal on earth. The plains of the city they consider one of the four paradises of the East. The Jews commonly call Paradise "the garden Eden ;" and they imagine at the coming of the Messiah they shall enjoy an earthly felicity, in the midst of delights ; and that till the resurrection and coming of the Messiah, their souls shall continue here in a state of rest.†

The garden of Eden has been sought in almost every part of the world. The countries in which the terrestrial paradise is said to have been placed, are Asia, Africa, Europe, America, Tartary, on the banks of the Ganges, the Indies, China, the Island of Ceylon, Armenia, under the Equator, Mesopotamia, Syria, Persia, Babylonia, Ethiopia, the mountains of the moon, Libanus, anti-Libanus and Damascus.

It is asserted that the Mussulmans do not believe that the paradise in which Adam was placed was terrestrial, but that it was in one of the seven heavens ; and that from this heaven he was thrown down in the Island of Ceylon, where he died, after having made a pilgrimage into Arabia, where he visited the place appointed for building the temple of Mecca. They say also, that when God created the garden of Eden, he cre-

* Volney's Travels.

† Modern Traveller.

ated there what the eye had never seen, the ear has never heard, and what has never entered into the heart of man to conceive. This delicious garden has eight doors ; whereas hell has but seven : and the porters which have the care of them are to let none enter before the learned, who make a profession of despising earthly, and desiring heavenly things.

The Orientals, it is said, reckon four paradises in Asia :—first, near Damascus ; second, in Persia ; third, in Chaldea ; and lastly, in the Island of Ceylon. The opinion which places the terrestrial paradise about Damascus, and near the sources of the Jordan is thought to be no novel opinion, nor peculiar to European writers.

Some conjecture that paradise was placed on a mountain, or at least in a country diversified with hills, because only such a country could supply the springs necessary to form four heads of rivers ; and because all heads of rivers rise in hills, from whence their waters descend to the sea. Such a country was supposed to be found in Armenia, until a new source of information was supplied by Captain Wilford, who placed Eden on the Imaus mountains of India.* Mr. Taylor is of opinion that the situation of paradise on the Indian Caucasus, or Imaus mountains, unites all those requisites which are deemed necessary coincidences with the Mosaic narration. Mountains, he thinks, furnish the sources of rivers ; many great rivers rise in these mountains. Paradise furnished four rivers ; four rivers rise in these mountains, in a vicinity sufficiently near, though not now from the same lake. Mankind travelled east to Babylon ; these mountains are east of Babylonia.

* Asiatic Researches, vol. vi., p. 455.

LETTER XLVII.

Mosque and churches at Damascus,—Church of St. John the Baptist, no traveller permitted to enter it,—Mosque of Omar, entered by Sir Sidney Smith, entered at a subsequent period by Dr. Richardson,—Curiosity excited by prohibiting an imaginary gratification,—Dimensions of the enclosure in which the mosque of Omar is situated,—Charms of the spot,—Stone occupying the centre of the temple a portion of the rock on which the city is built,—Prints of the prophet's foot and the fingers of the angel Gabriel,—Tradition of the "Locked up Stone,"—Interposition of the angel Gabriel,—Prophetical chair,—Mahommed horsed on the lightning's wing,—Site of the mosque of Omar,—Insults offered to Christians once common among the Turks,—Christian captives,—Mosque at Damascus improved and beautified by the Turks, revenues of Syria expended to adorn it,—Turks capable of achieving works of enterprise,—The Ottomans a people not to be despised, equal to the Spaniards, superior to the Portuguese, faithful to their Sultan, devout to their God,—Marmout grandson of Ali Pacha,—Turks and Quakers the most tolerant of sects,—Private dwellings at Damascus,—Gardens,—Coffee-houses,—Chan Verdy,—Iced water,—The Hooka.

THE mosques and churches at Damascus exhibit good specimens of the Oriental style of architecture. No traveller is permitted to enter the church of Saint John the Baptist, said to contain the ashes of that saint, and other holy memorials. The same prohibition extends to the mosque of Omar at Jerusalem, the danger and difficulty of entering which, as Sir Frederick Henniker testifies, has been verified on more than one occasion. Sir Sidney Smith, however, entered it with his followers, and when he was asked to produce the firman, replied that he himself was the Sultan, and therefore required no firman.* Previous to this event, Christians resi-

* Dr. Richardson, who entered the mosque of Omar, tells us that the veil of mystery does not conceal anything really worth seeing; the visitor, he says, feels no other surprise than is occasioned by the fact, that men have agreed to excite curiosity by prohibiting an imaginary gratification. The dimensions of the enclosure in which the mosque stands are estimated at about fifteen hundred feet in length, and a thousand in breadth. In the sacred

dent at Jerusalem were subjected to all manner of insult, and without any means of redress. It has now ceased in a great degree; in consideration of which, however, more gold is extorted at Easter than formerly. When the French advanced to the neighborhood all the Christians were thrown into prison; had they actually pressed forward to the city, these, it is stated, would have been all put to death without a solitary exception. Their imprisonment, notwithstanding, continued for several months, and the government availed itself of this circumstance, afterwards, to restore them to liberty on the payment of money.

Before Sir Sidney Smith asserted authority at the point of the sword, it was customary to spit in the faces of foreigners as they walked in the streets of Jerusalem. We would remark in passing that the difficulties of travelling among the Turks have been much exaggerated, or rather have considerably diminished of late years. The Mussulmans have been beaten into a kind of sullen civility, very comfortable to voya-

retirement of this charming spot, as Dr. Richardson says, the followers of the prophet delight to saunter or repose, as in the elysium of their devotions; and arrayed in the gorgeous costume of the East, add much to the interest, the beauty, and solemn stillness of the scene, from which they seem loath to retire. The large mass of stone which occupies the centre of the mosque, and to which the temple owes its origin, is thought to be a portion of the calcareous rock on which the city is built, and which prevails in other mountains in the neighborhood of Jerusalem. This stone, without doubt, is a part of the bed that was left when the foundation of the building was levelled. On this fragment of limestone, on the authority of Moslem tradition, are the prints of the prophet's foot and the fingers of the angel Gabriel. In a former letter we referred to the marvellous history of the "Locked up Stone," which manifested such sympathy for the persecuted seers who were compelled to flee for safety to other lands. The stone was resolved to accompany them in their flight. On this occasion, so says the legend, Gabriel the archangel interposed his authority, and prevented the departure of the prophetic chair. He grasped it with his mighty hand, and nailed it to its rocky bed till the arrival of Mohammed, who, horsed on the lightning's wing, flew thither from Mecca, joined the society of seventy thousand ministering spirits, and having offered up his devotions to the throne of God, fixed the stone immovably in this holy site, around which the caliph Omar erected his magnificent mosque.

—*Richardson's Travels.*

gers. This was said of the Turks a quarter of a century ago. They have improved since.

Vast sums of money were expended on the great mosque at Damascus; the Greeks, the Jews, the Christians, and Infidels have possessed it in turn. It has been made the temple of four different forms of worship; under the last the building was greatly improved. In the hands of the Mussulmans it was beautified with pavements of mosaic and pillars of variegated marble, the tops of which were ornamented with gold and studded with precious stones, and the whole ceiling covered with gold. The Persian geographer who gives us this account says, that the revenues of all Syria were expended to adorn this spacious edifice, as remarkable for its size, as for its magnificence. It would seem by this, that the church of St. John the Baptist was more adorned when converted into a mosque than when used as a church, or a synagogue. The mosque of Omar in Jerusalem, and that of St. Sophia in Constantinople, show us what the Turks are capable of achieving when stimulated to works of enterprise.

It has been observed that the Ottomans, with all their defects, are not a people to be despised. Equal, at least, to the Spaniards, they are superior to the Portuguese. If it is difficult to pronounce what they are, we can at least say what they are not: they are not treacherous, they are not cowardly, they do not burn heretics, they are not assassins, nor has an enemy advanced to their capital. They are faithful to their Sultan till he becomes unfit to govern, and devout to their God without an inquisition. Were they driven from St. Sophia tomorrow, and the French or the Russian enthroned in their stead, it would become a question whether Europe would gain by the exchange; England would certainly be the loser.*

Speaking of the ignorance of which the Turks are so generally, and sometimes justly accused, it may be doubted, observes the author of *Childe Harold*, in what useful points of knowledge the Turks are excelled by other nations, excepting

* Notes on the Present State of Turkey and the Turks.

France and England. Is it in the common arts of life? In their manufactures? Is a Turkish sabre inferior to a Toledo? or is a Turk worse clothed, or lodged, or fed, and taught than a Spaniard? Are their Pachas worse educated than a grandee? or an Effendi than a knight of St. Jago?

The author who puts these questions was asked by Marmout, the grandson of Ali Pacha, whether his fellow traveller and himself were of the upper or lower House of Parliament. The writer thinks this question from a boy of ten years old proved that his education had not been neglected. It may be doubted, he adds, if an English boy of that age knows the difference of the Divan from a College of Dervishes; but he is very sure a Spaniard does not. Marmout's Turkish tutors probably did not confine his studies to the Koran.*

The private dwellings at Damascus are externally plain, and usually enclosed within high walls of stone. The internal appearance, however, of these dwellings exhibits a different picture, and amply compensates for the lack of ornament without. In the private gardens are seen the luxuries of the East. Here, beneath the shade of orange groves, and lulled by dripping fountains, the Mussulman exhales the ambrosial weed, and loses the cares of life amidst a paradise of flowers, and the carol of singing-birds.

The coffee-houses where we found entertainment were anything but the delightful resort described by some travellers. Here you usually encounter a set of lazy Turks, smoking, dozing, or playing at chess. The Chan Verdy, however, or Coffee-house of Roses, as it is called, is somewhat celebrated, and is mentioned as one of the curiosities of the Levant. The beverage so much extolled, and in such general use, is an insipid preparation of iced water, composed of the juice of

* Among the different sects, adds the author, in his Notes, the Turks and Quakers are the most tolerant: if the former pays his haratch to the Koran, he may pray how, where, and when he pleases; and the mild tenets and devout demeanor of the latter make their lives the truest commentary on the sermon on the Mount.

currants and figs. It is carried through the bazaars and streets in large leathern bottles, and finds customers all over the city.

The hooka smoked here differs in shape and dimensions from the chibouque, or pipe, the constant companion of the Turk. The former is an unwieldy sort of apparatus, with a long wreathy snake, or "serpentine fumiduct" meandering some forty or fifty feet through the apartment. A tube of about eighteen inches in length is sometimes used as the stem of this shapeless machine, which contains the fluid through which the smoke is inhaled. A novice is put to no little inconvenience to keep this clumsy plaything rightly balanced, to say nothing of the troublesome process of getting it properly lit for smoking. Nothing but the most determined resolution to smoke could make it at all bearable, says one who had the courage to go through the operation of puffing the hooka. - We agree with him in saying, that the novitiate while drawing it is obliged to keep pulling and laboring, and making such efforts as greatly to endanger the safety of his brain, and respiratory organs; and all for what? to obtain a whiff of tobacco through a drop of dirty water.

LETTER XLVIII.

Greek patriarch of Antioch,—Church Missionary Society,—Circulation of the Bible throughout the countries of Asia,—British and Foreign Bible Society, its agency in the spread of the Scriptures,—Present state of religious liberty contrasted with the hindrances which existed in England,—Regulation prohibiting the reading of the Scriptures,—Convocation held in the reign of Henry VIII.,—Persons authorized to read the Bible, laboring classes prohibited on pain of imprisonment,—Early translation of Scripture into English, subject interesting to English readers,—Period not known when the Scriptures were first translated into the vulgar tongue,—"All Scripture given by inspiration of God,"—Authority of the Bible as a work of inspiration from Heaven, importance that it should be so understood by professors of Christianity,—Larger portion of the Books of the Old Testament originally written in Hebrew,—New Testament written in Greek,—Early history of the world written by Shem,—Family memoirs of Abraham written by himself,—Moses editor of the holy works extant in his time, conducted by Ezra in a later age,—Ezra's edition of the Holy Scriptures the same on which our faith now rests,—Bible read by the Saxons in their own language,—Four Gospels printed from a Saxon MS.,—Tyndal's translation of New Testament burnt at St. Paul's cross, prohibited to be read by Henry VIII.,—Shipwreck of Tyndal,—Confession,—New translation ordered by the king,—Tyndal seized and condemned to suffer death, his last moments, his character given by his adversary,—First complete translation of the Bible,—English language more indebted to the translators of Scripture than to all the authors who have written since,—Opinion of Bishop Lowth,—Present authorized English version of the Bible,—State of knowledge greatly improved within the last two hundred years,—Return to Damascus.

THE head of the Christian Church, the Greek patriarch of Antioch, resides at Damascus, and has aided to the utmost of his power the agents of the Church Missionary Societies, in circulating the Scriptures through this portion of the Eastern world. A person employed in this service gives a very encouraging view of the success of his exertions at Damascus, through the aid of the venerable head of the Greek Church, who, we are informed, undertook to promote and encourage the circulation of the Holy Scriptures, and sent letters to his bishops and archbishops to promote the object of the Bible

Society in their respective stations. Every Christian will respond to the remark, that such a movement affords a most gratifying prospect, as there could not be a more favorable spot selected for dispersing the Scriptures through all the countries of Asia.

The success of Foreign Bible Societies in assisting in printing the Scriptures in various languages, and diffusing a knowledge of the sacred writings, may be seen in the single statement published by the British and Foreign Bible Society, which was formed in the year 1804. This Society, it is hardly necessary to add, was created for the purpose of circulating the Holy Scriptures, without note or comment, not only throughout the British dominions, but also, according to its ability, in other countries, whether Christian, Mahomedan, or Pagan. The success which attended this glorious object exceeded the most sanguine expectation of its founders and supporters. "Their voice has gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world."

In 1825,—embracing a period of twenty-one years,—the Society expended, according to the Report, upwards of one million two hundred and sixty thousand pounds; and printed, or assisted in printing, the Scriptures in one hundred and forty languages, in fifty-five of which they had never before been printed; and issued upwards of four millions five hundred thousand copies of the sacred writings.*

Contrast the present state of religious liberty, public and private, with the hindrances to the spread of sacred knowledge which existed at one period in England, when the Bible was allowed to be read by such persons only as were authorized by the king; and when the law exacted that no mechanic, serving man, or the like, should read the Bible on pain of imprisonment for so offending! This regulation

* Five Bibles a minute, for ten hours every day, except the Sabbath, making three thousand per day, have been sent out the past year by the British and Foreign Bible Society, according to its annual Report for 1845.

prohibiting the reading of the Scriptures is a curious document, and furnishes a good commentary on the spirit of the times : In the convocation held in the reign of Henry VIII., it was enacted, " That no manner of person or persons after the first day of October, the next ensuing, should take upon him or them to read openly to other in any church or open assembly, within any of the king's dominions, the Bible or any part of the Scripture in English, unless he was so appointed thereunto by the king, or any ordinance, on pain of suffering a month's imprisonment. Provided that the chancellor of England, captaines of the warres, the king's justices, the recorders of any city, borough, or town, the speaker of the parliament, &c., which heretofore have been accustomed to declare, or teache any good, vertuous, or godly exhortations in anie assemblies, may use any part of the Bible or holie Scriptures as they have been wont ; and that every nobleman and gentleman, being a house-holder, may read or cause to be read by any of his familie servants in his house or garden, and to his own familie, anie text of the Bible or New Testament, and also every merchant-man, being a house-holder, and any other persons other than women, prentices, &c. But no women, (except noble women and gentle women, who might read to themselves alone, and not to others, any text of the Bible,) nor artificers, prentices, journeymen, serving-men, of the degree of yomen or under, husbandmen or laborers, were to read the Bible or New Testament in Englishe to himself, or any other, privately and openly, upon paine of one month's imprisonment."

The exact period is not known when the Scriptures were first translated into the vulgar tongue ;—a subject interesting to all English readers of the sacred writings. A brief abstract of the history of the early translations of the Bible may not be uninteresting to those who believe that " All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and profitable for doctrine, for reproof, and for instruction in righteousness." In connection with this subject it has been remarked, as being of no small

importance to every professor of that religion which is founded on the Bible, that the Bible itself should not only be well understood by him, but that its authority, as a work communicated by inspiration from Heaven, should be well ascertained. The authenticity of such copies of the Bible as are now procurable, and the correctness of those translations from such copies as are usually read and appealed to by us, are made an inquiry of some length by the editor of Calmet, to whose work the reader is referred for fuller particulars pertaining to the early translators and the original writers of the sacred volume.*

We may here note, that among the books cited in the Old Testament which are supposed to be lost are the "Books of the Wars of the Lord," and "Annals of the Kings of Judah and Israel;" the latter is thought to have been a triumphant song made purposely to celebrate the success of Joshua, and the miracle attending it. This book is supposed to have contained a collection of pieces of poetry made on occasions of remarkable events. Many of the local manners and customs of the ancient people of the East were doubtless preserved in those primitive songs. We are referred to the fact in English history that not only the most ancient chronicles in verse, but also many national events, are recorded in historical songs, which though unquestionably genuine and authentic, are yet nowhere else to be met with. The Saxon Chronicle,

* The larger portion of the Old Testament was originally written in Hebrew. The books of the new Testament were written in Greek, except Matthew, whose Gospel is supposed to have been written in Hebrew, or Syriac, the language then spoken in Judea. Of the authority of the Bible, it has been observed, that no injury is done to the just arguments on behalf of the inspiration of Scripture, if we suppose that Shem wrote the early history of the world; that Abraham wrote family memoirs of what related to himself; and that, at length, Moses compiled, arranged, and edited, to use a modern phrase, a copy of the holy works extant in his time. A procedure perfectly analogous to this, says a biblical scholar, was conducted by Ezra in a later age;—on whose edition of the Holy Scriptures our faith now rests, as it rests, in like manner, on the prior edition of Moses, if he were the editor of some parts; or on his authority, if he were the writer of the whole.

with several others, prove this ; but the most popular instances are the " Border Songs," or events narrated in rhyme, of the wars and contests between the English and the Scots, on the "debatable lands," before the union of the two crowns.*

The Saxons, it is pretty well ascertained, read the Bible in their own language ; some parts, at least, are said to have been translated by the venerable Bede and others, and printed at Oxford in the year 1699. The four Gospels are said to have been printed from an ancient Saxon manuscript, now in the Bodleian library ; it was originally published under the care of the martyrologist John Fox. Besides these early versions, several parts of the Scriptures had been from time to time translated by different persons ; proofs of which exist in different libraries in England. In 1349 the Psalms were translated by Richard Rolle, a hermit of Yorkshire. Soon afterwards John Wycliff translated the New Testament, copies of which are in different libraries.

In 1526, adds the author of these notes, William Tyndal printed the first edition of his New Testament at Antwerp, in octavo, without a name, with an epistle at the end, wherein he desired them " that were learned to amend, if aught were found amiss." This edition is said to be very scarce ; for soon after its appearance, the Bishop of London, being at Antwerp, desired an English merchant to buy up all the copies that remained unsold, which, with many other books, were burned at St. Paul's cross. This, it is thought, was done to serve Tyndal, which it certainly did, by putting a good sum of money into his pocket, and enabling him to prepare another edition for the press more correct than the former, which, however, was not printed till 1534. Orders and munitions were now issued by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the

* "The Book of Chronicles or days," contain the annals and journals written by public recorders in the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. They are not now in being, but are cited very frequently in the books of Kings and Chronicles, which are abstracts, chiefly from such ancient memoirs and records as, in all probability, were subsisting after the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity. The authors were generally prophets.

Bishop of London, to bring in all the New Testaments translated in the vulgar tongue, that they might be burned, and to prohibit the reading of them. In 1523, Henry VIII. ordered "all the books containing several errors, &c., with the translation of the Scriptures corrupted by William Tyndal, as well in the Old Testament as in the New, to be utterly expelled, rejected, and put away out of the hands of his people, and not to go abroad among his subjects." Tyndal finished his translation of the Pentateuch in the year 1528; but going by sea to Hamburgh, he suffered shipwreck, with the loss of all his books, papers, &c., so that he was obliged to begin the whole again. Tyndal himself, in a letter written in 1583, says, "I call God to recorde against the day we shall appear before our Lord Jesus, to give a reckoning of our doings, that I never altered one syllable of God's word against my conscience; nor would do this day, if all that is in the earth, whether it be honor, pleasure, or riches, might be given me. Moreover, I take God to witness to my conscience, that I desire of God to myself in this world, no more than without which I cannot keep his laws." It appears, however, that the king, in pursuance of his own settled judgment, thinking that much good might come from people reading the New Testament with reverence and following it, commanded the bishop to call to them the most learned of the ten universities, and to cause a new translation to be made; but nothing being done, the people still read and studied Tyndal's. It was therefore determined to get rid of so dangerous a heretic; and the king and counsel employed one Henry Philips, who insinuated himself into the acquaintance of Tyndal, and of Pointz, an English merchant, at whose house he lodged; and at a favorable opportunity he got the procurator-general of the Emperor's court, to seize on Tyndal, by whom he was brought to Vilvordeu, about eighteen miles from Antwerp. After being imprisoned a year and a half, notwithstanding letters in his favor from secretary Cromwell, and others, to the court at Brussels, he was tried, and none of his reasons in his defence

being admitted, he was condemned by virtue of the emperor's decree, made in the assembly at Augsburg, in the year 1536. Being brought to the place of execution, he was first strangled, calling out in his last moments, "Lord, open the King of England's eyes!" and then he was burned. Thus, adds the narrator of this melancholy story, died William Tyndal, with this testimony to his character given him by the Emperor's procurator or attorney-general, though his adversary, that he was "*Homo doctus, pius, et bonus*;" and others who conversed with him in the castle, reported of him, that "if he were not a good Christian man, they could not tell whom to trust."

The first complete translation of the Bible was printed in 1535, and dedicated to Henry VIII., a copy of which is in the British Museum. More than common care is said to have been taken in the language of this translation, the work of Bishop Coverdale, to whom, and to other translators of Scripture,—especially the authorized version,—our language, it is asserted, owes more than to all the authors who have written since: the expressions are never vulgar; they preserve their ancient simplicity pure and undefiled; and their circumstances and connection perhaps but seldom could be exchanged for the better. Such was the opinion of Bishop Lowth, who, as may be seen, has constantly used the original words where he has not differed from the translation. Whenever amendments have been intended in the language of the Scripture, says a critical writer, if we have gained anything in elegance we have almost assuredly lost in dignity.

A new translation of the Bible was made soon after the accession of James I. Learned men, amounting to forty-seven in number, were employed to perform this work, the labor of nearly three years. This translation was first printed in 1611, and is the present authorized English version of the Holy Scriptures.

It is thought by some, that a translation of the Scriptures, if undertaken at the present day, would have many advantages superior to those which attended King James' trans-

lation. It is urged as a reason that the state of knowledge is greatly improved within the last two hundred years; that geographical knowledge is much more correct, as well as extensive: that the knowledge of natural history and of natural philosophy, of the customs, manners, modes of thinking, and turns of expression among the Orientals, and many other requisite subjects, are better understood at present than they were formerly, and these are always of consequence, and occasionally of the utmost importance for conveying the true meaning of many passages of Scripture.

We return to Damascus, and ask the reader to accompany us on a short excursion along the environs of the city.

LETTER XLIX.

Environs of Damascus,—Summer cottages,—Granary of the Turks,—Wadi, or brooks,—Fertile fields,—Corn of the country,—Superior quality of the meal and bread,—Loaves used by the ancient Hebrews,—Bread-offerings,—Illustration from Scripture,—Different forms of bread,—Loaf used by our Lord at the Eucharist,—Mode adopted by the Orientals of thrashing corn,—Method of preparing grain for the manufacture of bread,—Hand-mill,—Employment of grinding confined to females,—Song of the females at the mill-stone,—Illustrations from Scripture,—Humane provision of the Mosaic law, neither the lower nor the upper mill-stone shall be taken in pledge,—Treading out corn in the open air,—Egyptian mode of thrashing out the corn,—Method adopted by the Arabians,—Corn carried in sheaves upon asses or dromedaries,—The oxen and the driver,—Chaff separated from the grain,—“Thrashing instruments having teeth,”—Passages from Isaiah,—Language of the East,—Fertile territories of Damascus,—Laborers at their tasks,—Judea, present and past,—Force of impression,—Perpetuity of the scenery and manners of Palestine.

THE environs of the city of Damascus are laid out in fertile and delightful meadows, or gardens, adorned with plants of the richest odor and hue. In the Plain of Roses, so called, blooms the “queen of bright flowers,” the damask rose, which was originally transplanted from the gardens of this city to Europe. It is hardly necessary to inform the reader that

the flowered silks and linens called Damask were originally from the manufactures of Damascus, and were probably invented by the inhabitants of that city.

The Damascenes enjoy the privilege of escaping from the dust and din of the crowded streets, and of making excursions into the environs of the city, where summer cottages are seen peeping through the foliage, and where the Turk dreams of paradise engendered in the ambrosia of the pipe, the elysium of tobacco,—

“Sublime tobacco !
Which on the Moslem's ottoman divides
His hours, and rivals opium and his brides.”

Damascus has been noticed as the only province of all Syria where there are delightful pleasure houses in the open country. These places of resort are commonly located upon the banks of the stream, shaded by trees, and lined with fragrant shrubbery.

The rich and noble plain south of Damascus has been called, from its fertility, the granary of the Turks. Some geographers designate this plain as the point where the modern Palestine begins. Through the country in this direction, there is not a single stream that retains its water in summer. Most of the villages, as Malte Brun says, have their pond, or reservoir, which they fill from one of their wadi, or brooks, during the rainy season.

Of all the districts south of Damascus Houran is considered the best for the culture of wheat. The extensive undulations of the fields, moving like the waves of the ocean in the wind, present a picture unsurpassed in beauty and grandeur. All travellers speak with enthusiasm of the plain, or cultivated gardens, rather, within the environs of Damascus. The corn raised in these districts is said to supply the caravans from all parts of the country; the bread from the meal is of a superior quality, and will keep for months without corrupting. The loaves usually made are two feet in length, and about nine inches in thickness.

We may here remark, that the loaves used by the ancient Hebrews, and offered every Sabbath day to God on the holy table, were ten hand-breadths long and five broad, and seven inches thick. In reference to the forms given to bread in different countries, it is thought that the loaves generally used among the Jews were round ;—some say square. We have representations of loaves divided into twelve parts, but it is not affirmed that the loaf used by our Lord at the Eucharist was thus divided ; but if it were, it shows how conveniently it might be distributed among the disciples, to each a part. Such compartition of it, it is thought, might tend towards settling the question whether Judas partook of it? Many think he did not. Such a divided loaf is considered to furnish a good comment on the passage in Corinthians : “ We being many are one bread,”—many partakers, each having his proportion from the same loaf.

The subject under consideration leads us again to call the reader's attention to the mode adopted by the Orientals of thrashing corn, or, in other words, of treading it out by the feet of cattle ; and their method, as of old, of preparing grain for the manufacture of bread.

In a former Letter we noticed how grain obtained from thrashing is commonly reduced to meal by the hand-mill. The employment of grinding with these simple machines, as before stated, is confined solely to females. A late traveller, in a tour to the Hebrides, speaks of these hand-mills as used by the women in Scotland. The grinders at this employment always accompany the grating noise on the stones with their voices ; and when ten or a dozen are thus employed, the fury of the song rises to such a pitch, that you would, without breach of charity, imagine a troop of female demoniacs to be assembled. As the operation of grinding was usually performed in the morning at day-break, the sound of the females at the hand-mill was heard all over the city, which often awoke their more indolent masters.*

* Pennant's Tour to the Hebrides.

The cessation of the sound of the mill-stone is mentioned in both Testaments as a mark of desolation: "Moreover, I will take from them the voice of mirth, and the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the sound of the mill-stones, and the light of the candle."—Jer. xxv. 10. "And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee, and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a mill-stone shall be heard no more at all in thee."—Rev. xviii. 22.

In the Mosaic institutes it was humanely provided that neither the upper nor the nether mill-stone should be taken in pledge; on the principle that no man could obtain his daily bread without the use of both: "No man shall take the nether or the upper mill-stone: for he taketh a man's life to pledge."—Deut. xxiv. 6. "You take my life when you do take the means whereby I live."

The Moors and Arabs continue to tread out their corn after the primitive custom of the East. Instead of beeves, as Dr. Shaw says, they frequently make use of mules and horses, by tying in the like manner, by the neck three or four of them together, and whipping them afterwards round about the thrashing floors, where the sheaves lie open and expanded, in the same manner as they are placed and prepared with us for thrashing. This is performed in the open air upon any round level plat of ground; at the same time the straw, which is their only fodder, is hereby shattered to pieces; a circumstance which Dr. Shaw thinks very pertinently alluded to in 2 Kings xiii. 7, where the king of Syria is said to have made the Israelites like the dust, by thrashing.

The Egyptian mode of thrashing out the corn is thought to destroy the chaff and to injure the quality of the grain. The mode here referred to we noticed was adopted in the different districts in Palestine through which we passed. Niebuhr gives a good idea of the manner of thrashing out the corn as practised among the Arabian peasantry. They lay the sheaves

down in a certain order, and then lead over them two oxen, dragging a large stone. They use oxen, as the ancients did, to beat out their corn by trampling upon the sheaves and dragging after them a clumsy machine. This machine is not, as in Arabia, a stone cylinder, nor a plank with sharp stones, as in Syria; but a sort of sledge, consisting of three rollers fitted with irons, which turn upon axles. A farmer chooses out a level spot in his fields, and has his corn carried thither in sheaves upon asses or dromedaries. The oxen are then yoked in a sledge, a driver gets upon it, and drives them backwards and forwards, or in a circle upon the sheaves; and fresh oxen are succeeded in the yoke from time to time. By this operation the chaff is very much cut down: the whole is then winnowed, and the pure grain thus separated.

We have witnessed the operation of thrashing out corn as mentioned by Niebuhr, in his journey to Egypt. Every peasant chooses for himself in the open field, a smooth plat of ground, from eighty to a hundred paces in circumference. Hither was brought on camels, or asses, the corn in sheaves, of which was formed a ring of six or eight feet wide, and two high. Two oxen were made to draw over it again and again the machine above mentioned; and this was done with the greatest convenience to the driver, for he was seated in a chair fixed on the sledge. Afterwards they throw the straw into the middle of the ring, where it forms a heap which grows bigger and bigger. When the first layer is thrashed, they replace the straw in the ring, and thrash it as before. It is now cast against the wind, which driving back the straw, the corn and the ears not thrashed out fall apart from it, and make another heap. A man collects the clods of dirt, and other impurities to which any corn adheres, and throws them into a sieve. The heaps are again placed in a ring, which is driven over for four or five hours together, till by absolute trampling they have separated the grains, which they throw into the air with a shovel to cleanse them.*

* Niebuhr's Travels.

Separating the corn from the shell or husk in which it is enclosed, was usually performed in most European countries by the staff or flail. How then, it has been asked, would an English agriculturist understand the passage in Isaiah which speaks of "a sharp thrashing instrument, having teeth?"—"Behold, I will make thee a new sharp thrashing instrument, having teeth; thou shalt thrash the mountains, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff; thou shalt fan them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them."—Isa. xli. 15.

He who thinks of the flail as his thrashing instrument, may well be permitted to wonder in what part of this instrument its teeth can be placed, and how it was to be used when increased by this addition. Those at all familiar with the customs and phraseology of the East, will readily comprehend the language as quoted from the prophet Isaiah. To an Eastern agriculturist, says Mr. Taylor, the passage was perfectly understood; to him every idea, every allusion, every sentence, were familiar as household words.

The mountains in the ample territories of Damascus are fertile, and richly repay the labor of the cultivator. In these directions may be seen the laborers at their tasks, their simple machines and rude implements of husbandry, picturing to the mind the primitive customs of the country, and the ancient cultivators of the soil. But what a contrast is presented to the mind, when the present condition of Judea is compared to that which marked the day of its prosperity, when the Jewish nation was in its glory, and under the special providence of the Almighty! There is however, as truly remarked, a force of impression produced in the scenery and manners of Palestine which nothing can change or diminish, and which accords well with the everlasting import of its historical records. The hills still stand round about Jerusalem, as they stood in the days of David and Solomon. The dews fall on Hermon, and cedars grow on Libanus; and Kishon, that ancient river, draws its streams from Tabor, as in the times

of old. The sea of Galilee still presents the same natural accompaniments; the fig-tree springs up by the wayside, the sycamore spreads her branches, and the vines and olives still climb the sides of the mountains. The desolation which covered the Cities of the Plain is not less striking at the present hour than when Moses, with an inspired pen, recorded the judgment of God; the swellings of Jordan are not less regular in their rise than when the Hebrews first approached its banks; and he who goes down from Jerusalem to Jericho still incurs the same hazard of falling among thieves.*

* Chateaubriand, *Itinéraire*.

LETTER L.

Castle at Damascus compared to a little town,—Magazine of Damascus sword-blades,—Source of revenue,—Dried fruits sent by the Damascene merchants to all parts of Turkey,—Character of the Damascenes,—Veracity of the Moslems never questioned, their strict honor in all money transactions,—Schools established at the principal mosques,—Moslem creed inculcates no tolerance for infidels,—Muezzin, or call to prayer, charm of the summons as proclaimed from the lofty minaret,—Prayers of the Jews remarkable for their length,—Lord's prayer, its brevity opposed to "vain repetitions" and "much speaking,"—Illustration from Scripture,—Battological service of the anti-rabbinical Jews at Jerusalem,—Reduced number of Caraites in the Holy City,—"Allah Hu!" concluding words of the summons to prayer, more solemn in effect than all the bells in Christendom, war-cry of the Mussulmans, heard amidst the loudest noises of the battle-peal,—Bells prohibited in Mahomedan countries,—Servants called by clapping of the hands,—Invitation to prayer repeated three times from the upper gallery of the minaret,—Solemn observance of the hour of prayer,—Turret erected on the grand mosque at Damascus,—Scenes of cruelty witnessed at Damascus,—Sufferings of the Jews,—Ordinance of the Turkish court,—Life, property, and honor of the Israelites placed under jurisdiction, their congregations recognized, their military services accepted, imposed with an equal share of taxation,—Persecution of the Jews too frequently brought on themselves by their own rash conduct, their contempt for all men but those of their own nation, their rooted hatred of the people among whom they live,—Usury and exactions of the Jews proverbial in all Europe, fleeced by all classes of people, destined to suffer until their hearts shall be turned to the Messiah, their King.

AMONG the objects of curiosity at Damascus is a castle or citadel which has been compared to a little town, having its own houses, streets, workshops, and the like; in this castle, a magazine was formerly kept of Damascus sword-blades, which were in such repute among the Asiatics during the wars of the middle ages. Though the manufacture of this famous steel has long been lost, Damascus, as already noticed, has still important fabrics of silk and cotton. Besides this source of revenue, the grapes, citrons, plums, and other fruits gathered from the abundant crops of the neighboring plain,

are dried and prepared into sweet-meats, and sent by the Damascene merchants to all parts of Turkey.

The people of Damascus are reputed to be witty and cunning; it is said also they have a bad reputation in the East, where Sham Shoumi, "the wicked Damascene," has even passed into a proverb; it is thought, the alliteration may have had some share in promoting its currency. Whatever be the reputation of the Damascenes as meriting the epithet contained in the proverb, their character for veracity was never questioned. A Turk's word is his bond. In all his money-dealings he is strictly honorable. In transacting business with the Moslems, as Byron says, there are none of those dirty peculations, under the name of interest, difference of exchange, commission, and so on, uniformly found in applying to a Greek consul to cash bills, even on the first houses in Para.

The same author speaks of schools which are established in all the principal mosques; they are very regularly attended; and the poor are taught without the church of Turkey being put into peril. The system, it appears, was not then printed, though there was such a thing as a Turkish press, and printed books in the Turkish language. Neither the Mufti, the Mollas, nor the Tesderdar had taken the alarm, for fear the ingenuous youth of the turban should be taught not to "pray to God their way." It will be recollected, however, the Moslem creed inculcates no toleration for infidels, and the followers of the prophet prefer extermination to conversion.

The muezzin, or the call to prayer, as proclaimed from the lofty minaret, is a ceremony observed in all Mahommedan countries, and constitutes a part of the Moslem form of worship. To the ear of a stranger the summons, as heard from the grand mosque at Damascus, has a peculiar charm.

"Hark! from the mosque the mighty solemn sound,
The muezzin's call doth shake the minaret,—
There is no God but God!—to prayer—lo! God is great!"

Hobhouse mentions hearing the call proclaimed from the minaret by a boy, who sang out his hymn in a sort of loud, melancholy recitative. He was a long time repeating the purport of these few words: "God most high! I bear witness that there is no God but God, and Mahomet is his prophet; come to prayer; come to the asylum of salvation. Great God! there is no God but God!"

It may be well here to observe that the prayers of the Jews are remarkable for their length and their battology, or tedious repetitions. Our Saviour undoubtedly intended, in the form prescribed in the Lord's prayer, that its brevity should be opposed to "vain repetitions," and "much speaking:"* "When ye pray, use not vain repetitions as the heathen do; for they think they shall be heard for their much speaking."—Matt. vi. 7.

The concluding words of the muezzin's call to prayer are

* Some years ago at Jerusalem, the Caraites or anti-rabbinical Jews, used the battological service, in the repeating of which the rabbin and the people speak alternately. The following is a portion of one of these services, taken from a journal published by Dr. Wolff, a converted Israelite, who has collected many interesting facts relating to the present condition of the Jews. The rabbin and the people, we have said, speak alternately:

RABBIN. On account of the palace which is laid waste;

PEOPLE. We sit lonely and weep.

R. On account of the temple which is destroyed;

P. We sit lonely and weep.

R. On account of the walls which are pulled down;

P. We sit lonely and weep.

R. On account of our majesty which is gone;

P. We sit lonely and weep.

'R. We beseech thee to have mercy upon Zion;

P. Gather the children of Jerusalem.

R. Make haste, O Redeemer of Zion;

P. Speak to the heart of Jerusalem.

When Dr. Wolff visited the Caraites at Jerusalem, in 1829, he found them reduced in number to an old man, some boys, and five women, whose husbands had fled from the persecution of the Turks to their brethren in the Crimea. All these persons lived in one house, and their synagogue was under the same roof.

There is a colony of the anti-rabbinical Jews in the Crimea. The brethren of this profession affirm that their ancestors had no share in the crucifixion of Jesus Christ; an assertion said to derive great weight from the irreproachable character which the Caraites every where enjoy.

"Allah Hu!" which, when proclaimed from the minaret by a fine voice, which is often the case, the effect is solemn and beautiful; more so, in the opinion of a celebrated poet, than all the bells in Christendom.* It is hardly necessary to mention that bells are prohibited in all Mahommedan countries. As the Turks hate a "superfluous expenditure of voice," the servants are called by clapping of the hands.

The voice of the chanter calling from the upper gallery of the minaret, at the still hour of evening, may be heard at a great distance; the ezan, or invitation to prayer, is repeated three several times from this lofty position. The summons, as a late traveller very well describes it, is pronounced five times in every twenty-four hours;—at break of day, at noon, at the moment the index of the dial gives a shade double its own length, at sunset, and again at noon as the last twinkling of light has ceased to shine in the horizon. At the instant the harmonious voices of the muezzin is heard, every Moslem abandons all for prayer and prostrates himself before God.

The first who erected a minaret or turret, was Valid, the son of Abdalmadec; this he placed on the grand mosque at Damascus, for the muezzin, or crier, to announce from it the hour of prayer.

Damascus has been lately brought into disgraceful notoriety from scenes of cruelty witnessed there arising out of the absurd belief among the lower classes that the Jews require

* The war-cry of the Mussulmans is "Allah Hu!" Amidst the volleying roar, and the loud booming of peal on peal, resounds the name of "Allah! Hu!" They dwell on the last syllable of the war-cry, which is said to give it a wild and thrilling effect:—

"And one enormous shout of 'Allah!' rose
In the same moment, loud as even the roar
Of war's most mortal engines, to their foes
Hurling defiance: city, stream, and shore
Resounded 'Allah!' and the clouds which close
With thickening canopy the conflict o'er,
Vibrate to the Eternal name. Hark! through
All sounds it pierceth—'Allah! Allah, Hu!'"

Gentile blood for the celebration of their passover. The sufferings of the Jews on this occasion show the excess of madness to which the populace may be driven when led on by the spirit of persecution. The details of the tragedy acted at Damascus have been given at length by the Austrian consul at that place. A few of the leading incidents, as related by him, we shall notice in the ensuing Letter.

It may be proper here to remark that, by a late ordinance of the Turkish Court, the Jews, in connection with the Greeks and Catholics, were allowed to participate in all the benefits of the law equally with Mahommedans. By this edict the Jewish congregations were not only openly recognized, but the life, property, and honor of the Israelites were placed under jurisdiction; their military services accepted, and an equal share of taxation imposed upon them. This general equalization opened a path for true civil amelioration, unaccompanied by those pains and fears which were caused by hoping for the same in Europe.* How far the wavering policy of the East may choose to follow out and realize these principles, remains to be seen. Every candid mind, however, must agree in the remark, that the Jews too frequently brought on themselves the persecutions which they endured by their own rash and obstinate conduct. They despised all men but those of their own nation. They nursed in their children and in their own hearts a rooted hatred of the people among whom they lived. They thought and acted as if they were masters, and not the remnant of scattered prisoners, under the anger of the God of Abraham. They sought to acquire money by usury and intolerant exactions. Their infamous actings in this particular became proverbial in all Europe. Hence, all classes of men made no scruple to fleece them by many unjust and severe exactions and plunderings. Their perseverance in unbelief and national rebellion demands the continuance of the rod, until their hearts shall have become subdued, and turned to the Messiah their king.†

* English Quarterly Review.

† History of the Jews, p. 333.

LETTER LI.

Facilities granted the Jews by the Pacha of Egypt,—Israelites treated as Mahommedan subjects,—Interview with Mahomet Ali,—Absurd belief that the Jews require Gentile blood for the celebration of the Feast of the Passover,—Strict obligations to keep the Passover,—Illustration from Scripture,—Blood of the Paschal lamb,—Idle fictions,—Mass-wafer given to the Jew's dog,—Image of the infant Christ discovered in the consecrated wafer,—Massacre of the Jews at Damascus,—Sudden disappearance of the Capuchin friar and his servant,—French Consul at Damascus,—Arrest of the Jewish barber,—Confessions extorted by bribes and torture,—Arrest and sufferings of the Hebrew merchants at Damascus,—Seizure of Arari's servant,—Confessions,—Renewed protestations of innocence on the part of the prisoners,—Effects of the bastinado, and the beating with rods,—Excitement among the lower classes professing to be Christians,—Application to the Pacha in behalf of the Jews,—Sanguinary persecution of the Israelites in 1348,—Tremendous visitation of the disease called the black death,—Jews accused of poisoning the rivers and fountains,—Two thousand Jews burnt in the public street at Strasburg,—Efforts made to bring the race of Abraham to the knowledge and belief of the Gospel,—Converted Israelites of the English Church,—Joseph Wolff,—The Talmud,—The Misna and Gemara,—Tradition of the rabbins concerning the body of Adam,—Accessions of the Jews held on a precarious tenure,—The Israelites considered by the Turks as a degraded and inferior race,—Maltreatment of the body of the Greek patriarch,—Privileges enjoyed by the Jews in Tuscany, their population in Leghorn,—Synagogue,—Want of outward reverence on entering the place of worship,—Jewish school at Leghorn,—Israelites at Gibraltar, their condition in Persia a fulfilment of the denunciation against them,—Illustrations from Scripture.

WHEN the Syrian provinces surrendered to the power of Mahomet Ali, and the Pacha of Egypt felt himself secure in his newly acquired dominions, considerable interest was felt as to the course he would adopt towards the Jews. In answer to various questions put to him on the subject, the Pacha promised every facility to those Jews who might be solicitous to return to the Holy Land; that he would treat them exactly as Mahommedan subjects; and would allow them, if they chose, to rent or purchase land, so as to become cultivators

or proprietors of the soil. This, however, was a mere verbal decision, in answer to questions submitted by an English missionary, who, desirous to ascertain the state of the case, had an interview with the Pacha. "Being myself," says the former, "in a peculiar sense, the father and the child of expediency, it is impossible to say how far the verbal decisions of the Pacha are to be relied on. The expediency of to-day may prove the in expediency of to-morrow."

Since the interview above mentioned, the Jews have been severely persecuted at Damascus, in the absurd belief, as already stated, that they require Gentile blood for the celebration of the feast of the Passover.* The folly of such an idea is in keeping with other idle fictions invented and propagated to excite a spirit of hatred towards the Jews. In a book discoursing on the miracles of the Holy Sacraments, we are gravely told that a Jew impiously said that if the Catholics would give the mass-wafer to his dog, he would eat it without any regard to their God. A number of wafers was placed on a cloth, and among those only one that was "consecrated into Christ's soul and divinity, body and blood." The dog being admitted, proceeded to eat the wafers, until he came to "the body of Christ." He instantly knelt down on his fore-feet; and then in a violent rage turned on his master, and seizing him by the nose, he tore it quite away! Another legend tells of a Jew who procured a consecrated wafer, and with great indignity cut it into pieces with a knife; and upon this a quantity of blood issued from it. Another, on breaking a

* The obligation to keep the passover was very strict; so much so, that some think whoever should neglect it was condemned to death; inferred from the following passage: "But the man that is clean, and is not in a journey, and forbeareth to keep the passover, even the same soul shall be cut off from among his people: because he brought not the offerings of the Lord in his appointed season, that man shall bear his sin."—Numb. ix. 13.

The paschal lamb which the Jews killed, tore to pieces, and ate, and whose blood preserved them from the destroying angel, is considered a type and figure of our Saviour's death and passion, and of his blood shed for the salvation of the world.

consecrated wafer, discovered a little child in it, which the priests declared to be Christ! These and similar absurdities, fabricated to rouse the populace against the Jews, are mentioned in "Notes" appended to the "History of the Jews."

The facts, as reported by the Austrian consul at Damascus, in relation to the cruel massacre of the Jews at that place are briefly as follows :

A capuchin friar named Father Thomas, who had resided many years in Damascus, and amassed a considerable sum of money, suddenly disappeared, and his servant was also missing. The friar, it seems, had been last seen in the Jewish quarters, from which it was concluded that he had been murdered by some of the inhabitants of that part of the city. A strict search was accordingly made there for the bodies of the two persons who had so mysteriously disappeared; their effects were found untouched in the chamber which they occupied. The French consul undertook to investigate the affair;—a man, if the Jews are to be believed, ill qualified for such a task, by his bitter enmity towards the professors of the Hebrew faith. As sub-agent in the business, he employed Mahommed el Telli, a Turk of bad character, whose release from prison, where he had been confined for debt, he procured for the purpose. One of the first persons arrested was a Jewish barber, who, on account of some confusion and contradiction in his answers, was thought to be more seriously implicated in the alleged murder than those who had been already examined. After bribes, beating, and torture had proved ineffectual to extort any confession from him, he was at length prevailed upon to accuse seven distinguished Hebrew merchants of desiring him to murder Father Thomas, who lay bound at the house of David Arari, one of their number; and having refused to commit so atrocious a crime, he was bribed by a sum of money to keep silence respecting what he had witnessed. The seven merchants were of course arrested; but, in answer to the questions put to them, declared themselves innocent. As it was

deemed unadvisable to bastinado them, lest the advanced age of some might cause them to expire under the first strokes, they were made to stand for thirty-six hours consecutively without being allowed to sleep. Neither this, nor a double beating with rods, availed anything to wring from them any confession of guilt. In the mean time, the servant of David Arari was seized, and by tortures was made to confess that he had murdered Father Thomas in his master's house, in the presence, and by order of the seven merchants under arrest; the blood of the victim had been received in a crystal vase, for religious purposes to him unknown. The barber, who had been previously examined, and himself, were then employed to cut the body in pieces; to bray in a mortar the bones and the skull; and carry the whole away to an aqueduct which flows through one of the streets inhabited by the Hebrews, at a distance from the dwelling of Arari. The barber, after some difficulty at last corroborated the testimony of the servant. Some bones were found at the place indicated, which, however, were afterwards stated by an able physician to be those of animals. The sight of them in no way induced the prisoners to retract their former protestations of innocence; but at last, after suffering much from beating with rods, and tortures of various kinds, they, one after another, confessed themselves guilty of the crime with which they were charged. Afterwards, when they had in some measure recovered from the effects of their cruel treatment, they renewed their declarations of innocence; asserting that their confessions of crime had been extorted by violence. No renewal of torture could wring a second confession from them. Besides these unfortunate merchants, various other Hebrews had been treated with the utmost severity; one man expired from the effects of the bastinado, and another from those of the beating with rods. The utmost excitement prevailed in Damascus; the lower class of those professing to be Christians, instigated by the monks, raged furiously against the Jews, and all those who opposed the tyrannical proceedings

against them. At the commencement of the persecution, a number of the most respectable Israelites took to flight, or secreted themselves in their houses from the violence and insults of the Christians.*

The Austrian consul at Alexandria applied to the Pacha to obtain from him instructions which might put a stop to such acts of insult and violence. In consequence of his representations, Mahomet Ali gave orders that these proceedings should cease; but it has not been ascertained whether he has caused a proper investigation into the affair, or issued such commands as would prevent the recurrence of a similar outrage.†

The late efforts made to bring the Jews to the knowledge and belief of the gospel have been attended in a few remarkable instances with success. It is stated, that there are at present eight converted Israelites who are clergymen of the English church. Among the most distinguished of these is the Rev. Dr. Joseph Wolff, who, we are told, after having travelled as a missionary to the Jews eighteen years, in all

* For further particulars relating to these outrages committed at Damascus, the reader is referred to the "History of the Jews, from the taking of Jerusalem, by Titus, to the present time;"—an able and interesting work.

† One of the most sanguinary persecutions of the race of Abraham was that which took place in 1348, during the prevalence of that dreadful malady which desolated half Europe, called the black death. Ignorant of the real cause of this tremendous visitation, the credulous multitude everywhere accused the Jews of poisoning the rivers and fountains, and polluting the atmosphere by magical arts. In vain did the miserable Israelites protest their innocence; in vain did they adduce the testimony of the most eminent physicians, who declared that the accusations were groundless and absurd; in vain did they point to the deaths among themselves, which proved that they possessed no control over an evil in which they shared alike: the mob, deaf to reason, clung to their ridiculous prejudices. In short, several Jews were arrested, and put to the torture, which wrung from them the confession that they were guilty of the imputed crime. No more was necessary to ensure their punishment; they were hurried away to the place of execution, and broke on the wheel. On this occasion two thousand unoffending Jews, without regard to age or sex, were burnt in a public street at Strasburg. The spot where the terrible conflagration took place is now known by the name of Brand Strasse, or Fire Street.—*Hist. of the Jews*, p. 161.

the four quarters of the globe, is now established in a quiet parsonage, as incumbent of Linthwaite, near Huddersfield, in Yorkshire. The following portrait of this very interesting character was drawn by one who intimately knew him :—

“A man who, at Rome, calls the Pope ‘the dust of the earth,’ and tells the Jews at Jerusalem that the Gemara is a lie ;* who passes his days in disputation, and his nights in digging the Talmud ; to whom a floor of brick is a feather bed, and a box a bolster ; who finds or makes a friend alike in the persecutor of his former or present faith ; who can conciliate a pasha, or confute a patriarch ; who travels without a guide, speaks without an interpreter, can live without food, and pay without money ; forgiving all the insults he meets with, and forgetting all the flattery he receives ; who knows little of worldly conduct, and yet accommodates himself to all men, without giving offence to any ; such a man,—and such and more is Wolff,—must excite no ordinary degree of attention in a country, and among a people, whose monotony of manners has remained undisturbed for centuries. By such an instrument, whom no school has taught, whom no college could hold, is the way of the Judean wilderness preparing.” Wolff, for laboriousness has been classed with Wesley and Whitefield, and for eccentricity has been ranked with Berridge of Everton, and Rowland Hill.

* The Talmud, or great book of Jewish traditions, is divided into the *Misma*, which is the text, and the *Gemara*, which is the commentary of the Rabbins on that text. A writer on the subject quotes the following as the opinion entertained by the learned doctors of Israel :—“Adam’s body was made of the earth of Babylon ; his head of the land of Israel, his other members of other parts of the world. God took twelve hours to make him. So huge was his stature, that he extended from one end of the earth to the other ; and with his hand he touched the firmament. And when he sinned, God laid his hand on him, and pressed him down into a moderately small shape.” The services of the modern Jews consist in reading the law of Moses, with a variety of prayers. They use no sacrifices ; no incense, no altars ; no entering within the veil. Their discourses are usually not in Hebrew, which is not understood by their people, but in the language of the country where they live.—*Encyclo. of Chris. Knowledge.*

It will be seen that the Jews within the last few years have received some justice at the hands of the European as well as the Oriental sovereigns; it is evident, however, they hold their accessions on a very precarious tenure.*

In Tuscany the Jewish inhabitants enjoy many privileges, and are highly favored. At Leghorn, where their population is rated at fourteen thousand, their condition is considered better than in any other part of Europe: here they have a synagogue; a handsome building, but neglected in point of cleanliness.

Unlike the custom observed in all Christian churches, the stranger is permitted to enter the synagogue with his hat on. The feeling of awe experienced on crossing the threshold of God's house is lessened by this non-observance of uncovering the head. This want of outward reverence, with the rank effluvia of the oil burnt at the ceremonies, left no favorable impression of the rites and observances of the Jewish synagogue. The place where the law is kept, and the reading desk, are adorned with white and variegated marble. There is a Jewish school at Leghorn on the Lancastrian model, where three hundred children are instructed in Hebrew, Italian, French, writing, and other branches of education; and a library, containing a collection of Hebrew books and manuscripts.

The Israelites resident at Gibraltar are computed to be two thousand in number. Here, as in all places under British protection, they are regarded, not as exiles, cut off from the society of all ranks of men, but as citizens possessing privileges in common with other professions and creeds. The

* Until very lately the Turks looked upon the Jews as a degraded and inferior race; and showed their contempt of them by all manner of insult. They delighted to notice the antipathy which subsisted between the Greeks and the Jews, two races of men upon whom the believers in the prophet looked down with lofty and indiscriminate disdain. When, not many years ago, the Greek patriarch of Constantinople was put to death in the most barbarous manner, the Jews, it is said, eagerly assisted in his murder and the maltreatment of his body.

case is the reverse in some countries : in Persia, for instance ;—there the race of Abraham is a striking illustration of the curse denounced in Deuteronomy : “The Lord shall smite thee with blindness and astonishment of heart.”—Deut. xxviii. 28.

On the authority of a late traveller, the curse has fallen on the Persian Jews, many of whom become mad from oppression, and blind from the privations which they endure.

LETTER LII.

Incident on the route,—Unexpected addition to the travelling party,—The contrast,—Journals purporting to be sketches of American manners,—Taking leave,—Grotesque appearance of the party,—Arabs of the desert, wanderers poor but proud, their genealogy traced through a line of nobility beyond the princes and nobles of Europe,—Original Arab stock, their contempt for the government of any nation,—Arab's hatred of the Russian and the Turk,—Poetry of the Arabs more exalted in its character than that of any other nation, their hospitality to strangers,—Beautiful feeling of personal independence of character,—Edict of the Bishop of Beirout,—Attainments of the Arabs in the studies of science and philosophy, their history compared to that of the Hebrews, their literature, books, &c.,—Present condition of Palestine attributed to the state of bondage in which the people are kept,—Principal inhabitants of Palestine,—Terraced hills,—Method of cultivation among the primitive masters of the soil,—Structure of the Judean mountains,—Questions arising out of the subject answered by the prophets,—Illustrations from Scripture,—Feelings experienced in travelling the countries of Judea,—Chateaubriand's reflections,—Birth-place of commerce and emporium of the East,—Syria the theatre of wars and civil dissensions, the playground of ambition,—Commencement of the contest for the sepulchre of Christ,—Crusaders expelled by the sultans of Egypt,—Syria overrun and ravaged by Tamerlane, entered by the French under Napoleon,—Last crusade annihilated forever the hope of rescuing the Holy Land,—Departure from Syria,—Lines from Bishop Heber's Palestine.

On the route to Damascus, as we halted for a short refreshment, we encountered an English traveller, without guide or attendant, pursuing his way along the solitary heights of mount Lebanon. The stranger, whose exterior was some-

what prepossessing, rode a fine Arabian horse, whose sleek appearance exhibited a very perceptible contrast to the rough, ill-looking animals on which we were mounted. The traveller's countenance lighted up as he very unexpectedly found himself in the midst of a company speaking the same language, and freely exchanging the friendly salutation of "Good-day." He apologized for his unceremonious appearance, and in a few words narrated the accident of losing his servant, who it seems, had absconded with the few remaining articles of his wardrobe, including some loose change which the trusty attendant had forgotten to leave behind. There was something in the air and manner of the stranger which won upon the good feelings of the party, and he was at once invited to join us, and share our mess. Our new companion changed his route, and proceeded with us to Damascus. We found him an agreeable addition to our party; there was a spice of romance in his character which gave a zest to his general conversation. He spoke several languages, and had seen much of the world, America excepted: on his return to Europe he intended to visit the United States. Speaking of books of travel, he ridiculed the idea of forming opinions of a whole people from the peculiarities of the few; a mode of judging adopted by sundry writers of journals, purporting to be sketches descriptive of the people of America. To judge the character of a whole community from that of a few individuals, resembles the sagacity of the man, who, in offering his house for sale, carried a brick in his pocket as a specimen of his estate. To speak of America and the Americans as they deserve, added our English friend, is a task yet to be accomplished.

Arriving at the point where the stranger first joined us, we halted to take leave of our guest, who was shortly on the way to Baälbec, a long and dreary distance, through solitudes of rock, and broken steeps. "Here we met, and here we part; the agreeable incident of our coming together on this spot," said the stranger, "will occupy my thoughts for

the rest of the day, and for many a day to come." "But there are dangers in the way, and will you go alone?" "Yes," he replied, "I have fleet feet to bear me, and shall soon measure my ground." So saying, he clapped spurs to his steed, and was soon lost among the windings of the distant precipices.

Our party were miserably mounted, and exhibited, as we have said, an odd contrast to the restive and high-mettled horse which the Englishman rode, who with difficulty kept pace with donkeys and mules worn down by long journeys and hard usage. Our grotesque appearance was not a little enhanced by the huge stuffed bags which were fastened on the backs of the mules and asses, and which served as apologies for saddles. They are at first annoying to travellers, whose legs, by a most unhorseman-like position, are made to project at right angles from the body, while the feet are left dangling without the aid of stirrups. In traversing the deserts these saddles are found to be the easiest, and lessen the fatigue of toilsome journeys under the heat of a scorching sun.

Our guides amused themselves with singing or smoking, a resource always at hand to pass away time. They were Arabs, belonging to the tribes which inhabit the deserts. Their dress is rude, and quite simple. A small coarse turban is bound round the head; this covering is sometimes decorated with strings, or tassels, tied into small hard knots. A long frock, or shirt of blue stuff, falls down to the knees; the rest of the leg is left bare. A buskin made of goat's hide usually covers the foot. A sort of camel's hair cloak, with long square holes for the arms, and vertically striped, is worn as an outer garment. The pipe is the constant companion, and when not in use is suspended from the back, or thrust for convenience through the folds of the turban. Who is happier than he, as he whiffs his weed, and cheers the way with a song?

A late missionary to Syria, at an anniversary meeting of the American Board of Missions, gave a graphic sketch of

the Bedouin Arab of the desert ; a wanderer poor but proud ; and can trace his genealogy through a line of nobility beyond that of the princes and nobles of Europe. He is of the original Arab stock, and possesses all the characteristics of the original race. In the spirited language of the narrator, the Arab of the desert is as free as the chainless wind in all his movements. He scorns the government of any nation, and although you may still see black tents of the Arab scattered about the hills of Mount Lebanon, and on the borders of the Euxine and Caspian seas, still he detests the control of the Turk, and hates the Russian ; and on the least attempt to curb him he flies to the desert, and luxuriates on poverty and freedom.

We before referred to the hospitality of the Arabs of the desert, and to their nice sense of honor in keeping faith with the stranger. In their poetry, which is said to be more exalted in its character than that of any other nation, they extol that Arab who consumes his substance to entertain strangers ; and the Arab, as the reverend missionary truly asserts, has no greater boast than that the fire of his hearth never goes out, but is always burning to cook food for the stranger, his guest. Dismount from your horse in the desert, and enter the Arab's tent, and he will entertain you as Abraham did of old, if not with the calf, yet with milk and butter, and the best he has, and wait on you till you are refreshed ; for to be economical is with the Arab the height of meanness.

It is noticed as a trait in the Arab character that he never sheds blood if he can avoid it. He will sometimes kill his opposers rather than submit to any government ; and if blood be shed, it belongs to his nearest relative to avenge. This beautiful feeling of personal independence of character is possessed by the menial servants, who stand up and raise their voice in the presence of their masters, like sons of republicans in their fathers' halls. The author of these remarks relates an anecdote characteristic of this personal

independence of character: the bishop of Beirout threatened to excommunicate those Arabs who came to hear the missionaries preach. On the Sunday after the bishop issued the edict, the chapel was fuller than ever.

The Arabs are considered a very talented race. "I have examined all their books of science, mathematics, &c.," says one qualified to judge,* "and it is curious to see how they have started from points totally opposite to our scientific landmarks, and have arrived at precisely as accurate results. Again, there is Algebra, which owes its origin to them,—its name is Arabic. In astronomy they are proficient, and have corrected the calculations made at Cairo and Damascus. The bright star of Taurus, and those in the belt of Orion, are named in Arabic and by Arabs. In philosophy they often reason more accurately than the most civilized nations of Europe."†

We before had occasion to observe, that the present condition of Palestine is chiefly owing to the degraded state of bondage in which the people are kept: other calamities have doubtless aided in effecting the ruin of the country; sieges and wars have converted its fields of plenty into fields of blood. Under an enlightened government, and inhabited by a free people, Canaan might again be made a prosperous country.

We noticed also the natural resources of the soil, which, if properly cultivated, would yield a rich harvest. The labors of industry are everywhere rewarded with abundance. The finest fruits spring almost spontaneously from the earth. The stony districts abound in aromatic herbs, from which the wild

* Rev. Eli Smith, Missionary to Syria.

† The history of the Arabs has been compared to that of the Hebrews, full of romance and chivalry, and high and lofty achievements. "Their poetry," says Mr. Smith, "is like ascending from earth to heaven; it is the soul of sublimity; and for the boldness of its metaphors, the beauty of its rhythm, the brilliancy of its language, cannot be surpassed. In literature they excel all other nations, for there is no country which possesses so many different books in the native tongue; and a learned German is now publishing a work, in nine large volumes, which contains only the names of the titles of the native Arab books."

bees extract their luscious stores. The great plain joining the Dead Sea and from its saltiness thought unserviceable for vegetation and pasturage, had yet its proper usefulness, as Maundrell observes, for the nourishment of bees, and for the fabric of honey; for he perceived in many places the smell of honey and wax as strong as if he had been in an apiary. Why then, he asks, might not this country very well maintain the vast number of its inhabitants, being in every part so productive of either milk, corn, wine, oil or honey? which are the principal food of these eastern nations: the constitution of their bodies and the nature of the clime inclining them to a more abstemious diet than used in England, and other colder regions.

The rocks and hills were anciently covered with earth, and the mould supported by stones placed in form of a wall along the sides of each hill from the base to the summit. This mode of culture everywhere strikes the eye as you traverse the mountains of Palestine. These terraced hills attract the attention of the traveller, and show to what extent the earth was cultivated by the primitive inhabitants of the country. Every spot of rising ground bears traces, more or less perfect, of having been terraced from top to bottom. God himself seems to have suggested the method of cultivation to his people by the very structure of the Judean mountains. Most of them are stratified in a horizontal direction; and the strata appear at such regular distances, that in many cases they appear as the foundation of the dyke, or rough wall which supports the terrace.* "The question," says one who stood upon the spot, "was continually rising, 'Where are all the vines that covered these hills with their fragrant clusters?'" The prophets have answered: "Howl, ye vine-dressers, for the vine is dried up, and the fig-tree languisheth."—Joel i. 11, 12. "The new wine mourneth, the vine languisheth, and the merry-hearted do sigh."—Isaiah xxiv. 7.

"Are these empty terraces ever to be replenished again?"

* Foreign Missionary Record.

The prophet has answered : " Behold the ploughman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed ; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt. And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof ; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them."—Amos ix. 13, 14.

In travelling through the countries of Judea, and passing from solitude to solitude, the heart is filled with profound melancholy ; but this feeling wears off by degrees, and you experience, as Chateaubriand says, a secret awe, which, so far from depressing the soul, imparts life and elevates the genius. " Extraordinary appearances everywhere proclaim a land teeming with miracles. The burning sun, the towering eagle, the barren fig-tree, all the poetry, all the pictures of Scripture are here. Every name commemorates a mystery, every hill re-echoes the accents of a prophet. The desert still appears mute with terror ; and you would imagine that it had never presumed to interrupt the silence since it heard the voice of the Eternal."

These are the regions, says an eloquent writer,* which in every age have been made the play-ground of ambition, now consigned to comparative barrenness,—the country of the olive and the vine, the cedar and the oak, the mulberry and the palm, which could boast the richest pastures, the finest corn-lands, the most delicious fruits, the birth-place of commerce, the emporium of the East ; in a word, the country which numbers among its cities Tyre and Sidon, Tripoli and Antioch, Baälbec and Palmyra, Aleppo and Damascus, and all in the hands of the Turk !

Since the days of the Crusades these remarkable regions have been made the theatre of wars and civil dissensions. In 1096 commenced the contest for the sepulchre of Christ ; and the armies of the cross conquered that part of Syria called the Holy Land ; which they kept possession of for above a

* Chateaubriand, *Itinéraire*.

hundred years. In 1291 the Crusaders were totally expelled by the Sultans of Egypt. In the beginning of the fifteenth century Syria was again overrun and ravaged by Tamerlane. After this period it underwent the revolutions of Egypt till both were conquered by the Turks under Selim I., in 1517.

For three centuries Syria was held in the undisturbed possession of the Turks, until the French under Napoleon stormed the walls of Gaza, and were finally repulsed by the British at Acre, the Accho of Scripture.

History has recorded the wars and contests to redeem the sepulchre of Christ. The last crusade annihilated forever the hope of rescuing the Holy Land from the hands of its Turkish rulers. Saladin once more fixed the crescent upon the hills of Judah. Since that period, after various revolutions, it finally changed its masters for the seventeenth time, by surrendering to the Turkish arms.*

We bid adieu to Syria, once the paradise of the East ; but now, as truly called, a vast Necropolis, where the oppressed and degraded population may be said to live among the tombs.

Notwithstanding the total want of comfort which everywhere attended us on our journeys through Palestine, we experienced a feeling of regret as we left the shores of Syria, and looked for the last time on the hill country of Judea, the land where Scripture associations crowd upon the mind, and once the scene of so many important, so many wonderful events.

Who can behold the waste places of Judea, its ports and cities deserted and in ruins, its people shut out from the light of knowledge, and made the slaves of despotic masters, without feeling the force of the prophetic denunciation uttered against this land, the once favored spot of all the earth !

The beautiful lines of Bishop Heber, though familiar to most readers of English poetry, are too appropriate to be omitted here :—

* History of the Crusades.

" Reft of thy sons, amid thy foes forlorn,
Mourn, widowed queen, forgotten Zion, mourn !
Is this thy place, sad city, this thy throne,
Where the wild desert rears its craggy stone ;
Where suns unblest their angry lustre fling,
And way-worn pilgrims seek the scanty spring ?
Where now thy pomp, which kings with envy viewed ;
Where now thy might, which all those kings subdued ?
No martial myriads muster in thy gate ;
No suppliant nations in thy temples wait ;
No prophet bards thy glittering courts among
Wake the full lyre, and swell the tide of song.
But lawless Force, and meagre Want are there,
And the quick-darting eye of restless Fear ;
While cold Oblivion, 'mid the ruins laid,
Folds his dark wing beneath the ivy shade."

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